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ABSTRACT

A decentralized noncenter agreement pattern of inter-school district cooperation is examined in this final of four case studies addressing access of rural students to vocational education. The report identifies essential features of this form of cooperation, details factors facilitating/impeding the operation/maintenance of the cooperative arrangement, assesses the program's compatibility with its three-county southwestern Illinois setting, and recommends modifications for further study and development. Chapter I presents study background, purposes, and methods. Chapter II outlines political and demographic setting characteristics. Chapter III analyzes size, facilities, finances, governance, staff, scheduling, curriculum, students, and perceptions of school personnel and community members of the participating school districts. Chapter IV focuses on the history, legal structure, financing and costs, size, staff, scheduling and curriculum, students, and transportation needs of the center. Chapters V through VII detail consumer homemaking, occupational home economics and vocational agricultural programs. Chapter VIII offers a summary, concludes that this type of approach works best where distances between communities are relatively short and schools have high-quality programs not offered by other districts, and recommends that this concept be explored further. Appendices contain the continuing vocational joint agreement documentation and billing work sheet. (NEC)

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Access to Educational Opportunity in Rural Communities: Alternative Patterns of Delivering Vocational Education in Sparsely Populated Areas

Volume 5: Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement: A Decentralized Noncenter Agreement

Ruth G. Thomas
Roland L. Peterson
Rick Rabideau

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ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES: ALTERNATIVE PATTERNS OF DELIVERING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS

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AD-SB-2715

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ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES:
ALTERNATIVE PATTERNS OF DELIVERING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
IN SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS

Volume 1: Problem, Study Design and Procedures, Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations. Thomas, R. and Peterson, R.

Volume 2: The Heartland Vocational Center: A Decentralized Center. Thomas, R.; Peterson, R.; Anderson, M.J.

Volume 3: The Northwest Multi-District: A Mobile Facilities Center. Peterson, R.; Thomas, R.; Anderson, M.J.

Volume 4: The Inter-District Cooperative Center: A Centralized Center. Peterson, R.; Thomas, R.; Rabideau, R.; Anderson, M.J.

Volume 5: The Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement: A Decentralized Noncenter Agreement. Thomas, R.; Peterson, R.; Rabideau, R.

Volume 6: Glencoe, Lester Prairie, Brownton: A Centralized Noncenter Agreement. Peterson, R.; Thomas, R.; Rabideau, R.

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CHAPTER I

STUDY BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, AND METHOD

The Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement case study is one of a series of case studies completed between 1980 and 1983 under a project sponsored by the University of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station. These case studies were part of an inquiry begun in 1978 to address the problem of access of rural students to vocational education through inter-school district cooperation.

The purposes of the case studies were to: 1) identify, describe, and analyze means of delivering vocational education in sparsely populated rural areas that involve cooperation among school districts; 2) provide an information base relevant to state and local policy questions regarding such programs; 3) make recommendations regarding the appropriateness of each form of cooperation studied for various community and geographical settings; and 4) generate concepts and hypotheses to guide further study and development of educational delivery in sparsely populated rural areas. Each case study addressed the following questions:

1. What are the essential features of this form of inter-school district cooperation?

2. How does the cooperative arrangement work? What factors seem to facilitate or impede its operation and the maintenance of cooperation between school districts?

3. How does the cooperative arrangement fit with the characteristics of its setting (i.e., with geographical, community, and school district characteristics)?

4. What consequences does the cooperative arrangement have for educational access and quality?

5. How might the cooperative arrangement be modified?

While there are several existing and potential approaches to delivering vocational education in sparsely populated rural areas, the case studies in this series are limited to approaches that are managed by school districts, serve secondary students, and involve cooperation among school districts. The portion of the case studies concerned with specific vocational programs focuses on agriculture and home economics programs.

The general model from which the case studies were generated is presented in Figure 1. Only the portion of Figure 1 which concerns cooperative school patterns is addressed by this series of case studies. The Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement case study represents an example of the decentralized variation of the noncenter cooperative school pattern. Relevant literature was reviewed and the model presented in Figure 1 was formulated in an earlier publication (Peterson et al., 1981).

Case study methodology was used for developing a general understanding of inter-school district cooperation because it provides detailed description based on in-depth observation and can uncover underlying factors unlikely to be discovered using less intensive methodologies. However, it also limits the generalizability of the data. The trade-off seemed appropriate given the goal of understanding the patterns of inter-school district cooperation and the sparse knowledge regarding the delivery of vocational education in rural areas. Potentially critical variables must be identified before they can be studied using research methods that lead to broadly generalizable results.

Instruments and data collection procedures were developed to address the variables listed in Figure 2. These variables were selected on the basis of a literature review presented earlier (Peterson et al., 1981). The relationships among the research questions, data collected, data sources, and the data collection methods are presented in Table 1. One set of instruments, which required data from records and other descriptive information, was sent to the site for completion prior to the site visit. A second set of instruments was used to guide on-site observations and interviews with school personnel and community members. Instruments, study design, and procedures were pilot-tested in February and March 1980.

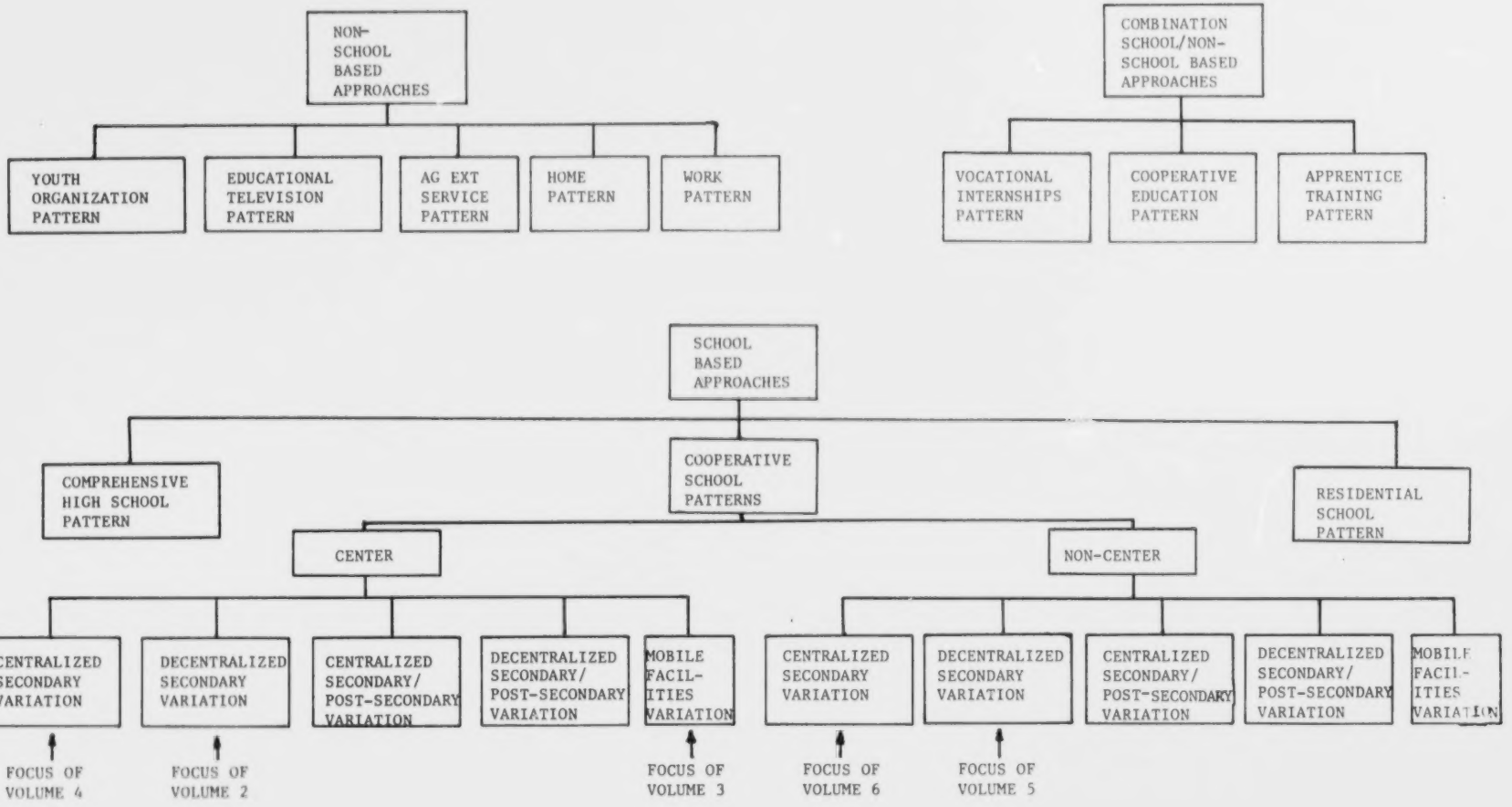

Figure 1. Conceptual model of approaches, patterns and variations for delivering vocational education

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PROGRAM INPUTS	SCHOOL INPUTS	COMMUNITY INPUTS
curriculum	governance	size
program size	total curriculum	population density
travel involved	school size	geographical location
facilities	school facilities	cultural/ethnic character
student	students	socioeconomic character
age	college/vocational orientation	tax base
attitude	families	unemployment rate
grade level	special needs	poverty level
prior education	dropout rates	average age
dropout rate	school district	educational level
ethnicity	administration	mobility
Program administration	budget resource base	employment opportunities
program staff	school schedules	educational opportunities
size	school staff	
qualifications	size	
attitudes	qualifications	
teaching loads	attitudes	
cost	policies	
schedules		
advisory groups		
student organization		
policies		

Student Outcomes	Community Outcomes
skills and abilities	trained personnel
attitudes	program and school knowledge
future plans	program and school relationships
future placement	

Figure 2. Input and outcome variables relevant to vocational education delivery patterns.

Study sites were chosen by locating delivery systems fitting the conceptual model in Figure 1 through a selected state and comprehensive national survey. The pool of potential sites was limited to small rural school districts which offered both agriculture and home economics programs since the delivery of these vocational programs in sparsely populated areas was of particular interest. Further criteria in site selection included cooperation of school officials and others at the site and accessibility within resource constraints of the project.

All selected sites contacted agreed to participate, although in some instances individual school districts did not participate in the full-scale data collection. Interviews were scheduled by school personnel in advance of the site visit. The site visit involved a team of three researchers who spent one to three days conducting interviews and observing the cooperative arrangement in action. Interviews were conducted with vocational directors, school superintendents, principals, board members, vocational program advisory committee members, home economics and agriculture teachers, school counselors, and parents of students. State guidelines and legal structures were obtained from state department of education staff. A profile of the setting was constructed on the basis of data obtained from the U.S. Census, state agencies, on-site observations, and pre-site-visit questionnaires. Data from the 1980 U.S. Census were not available at the time site profiles were developed, so 1970 census data were used and supplemented by more recent data from state and other federal agencies. In some instances, comparable data across years and communities were unavailable.

Table 1. Research questions, data to be obtained, source(s) of data and method of data collection.

Research Questions	Data to be Obtained	Data Source(s)	Method of Data Collection
1. What are the essential features of this form of inter-school district cooperation?	1. Number of facility locations	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s) and direct observation	Interviews, on-site observations
	2. Type of governance structure	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s) and governance documents	Interviews, on-site observations, document analysis
	3. Structure, responsibility and role of administrative staff	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s) and governance documents	Interviews, document analysis
	4. Structure and responsibility of teaching staff	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s) and teaching staff	Interviews, questionnaires
	5. Financial structure(s)	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s), policymakers and agreement documents	Interviews, questionnaires, document analysis
	6. Nature of legal agreements between schools	Agreement documents	Document analysis
	7. Approval mechanisms	Agreement documents, state Dept. of Education	Document analysis, interviews
	8. Transportation patterns	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s)	Interviews, questionnaires
	9. Vocational curriculum	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s), student handbook	Interviews, questionnaires, document analysis

Table 1, cont'd.

Research questions, data to be obtained, source(s) of data and method of data collection

Research Questions	Data to be Obtained	Data Source(s)	Method of Data Collection
2. How does the cooperative arrangement work? What factors seem to facilitate or impede its operation and the maintenance of cooperation between school districts?	1. Communication networks among schools	Cooperative arrangement administrator(s) teachers, agreement documents	Interviews, questionnaires, document analysis
	2. Perceived need for cooperation	Cooperative arrangement policymakers, school administrators, community members, teachers	Interviews, questionnaires
	3. Perceived benefits from cooperation	Cooperative arrangement policymakers, school administrators, community members, teachers	Interviews, questionnaires
	4. Transportation	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators	Interviews, questionnaires
	5. Schedules	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators	Interviews, questionnaires
	6. Enrollments	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, state reports	Questionnaires, reports analysis
	7. Attitudes	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, policymakers, teachers, community members	Interviews, questionnaires
	8. Resources	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, policymakers, state reports	Questionnaires, interviews, report analysis

Table 1, Cont'd.

Research questions, data to be obtained, source(s) of data and method of data collection.

Research Questions	Data to be Obtained	Data Source(s)	Method of Data Collection
3. How does the cooperative arrangement fit with the characteristics of its setting (i.e., with geographical, community and school district characteristics)?	1. Attitudes toward education	School administrators, teachers, policy-makers, community members, students, parents	Interviews, questionnaires
	2. Resources provided to school	State-generated reports	Report analysis
	3. Future education and career plans of high school graduates	School counselors, students, parents	Interviews, questionnaires
	4. Community demography, cultural and ethnic background	U. S. Census, State Dept. of Economic Security	Document analysis
	5. Community resources	State Dept. of Economic Security, local telephone book, direct observations	Document analysis, on-site observations
	6. Community economic patterns	State Dept. of Economic Security, U. S. Census	Document analysis
	7. Community health statistics	State Dept. of Public Health	Document analysis
	8. Physical geography	Direct observation	On-site observation
	9. Transportation systems available	State Dept. of Economic Security, maps	Document analysis
	10. School district enrollments, class size	State reports, school administrators	Report analysis, questionnaires
	11. School district income, expenditures	State reports	Report analysis, questionnaires
	12. School district faculty and administration size, qualifications	School administrators	Questionnaires

Table 1. (cont'd.) Research Objectives, Data to be Obtained, Sources(s) of Data and Method of Data Collection

Phase II Objective	Data to be Obtained	Data Source(s)	Method of Data Collection
	13. School district facilities	School administrators, direct observation	Questionnaires, interviews, on-site observation
	14. School district schedules	School administrators	Questionnaires, interviews
	15. School district curricula	Student handbook	Document analysis
	16. School district student transportation patterns	School administrators	Questionnaires, interviews
4. Assess the consequences of alternative forms of inter-school district cooperation for educational access and educational quality.	1. Access		
	a. Number of students enrolled in cooperative delivery mechanisms	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, teachers	Questionnaires, interviews
	b. Curriculum available to studnts	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, handbooks reports	Questionnaires, interviews document analysis
	c. Transportation requirements for students	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators	Interviews, questionnaires
	d. Schedules	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, faculty	Interviews, questionnaires
	2. Quality		
	a. Student organization functioning	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, teachers	Interviews
	b. Faculty qualifications	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, faculty	Interviews, questionnaires
	c. Facilitaties	Cooperative arrangement and school administrators, faculty, direct observation	Interviews, questionnaires, on-site observation

[1]Research question five is not inlcuded in the table since it involves extension from and interpretation of the data rather than data collection.

Data presented here were collected in April 1982. A comparative analysis of all five case studies is presented in Volume 1 of this series (see p. ii) and provides an analytical discussion of the significance and implications of the descriptive information contained in each of these case studies.

CHAPTER II

SETTING

Political Setting

At the time of the site visit, Illinois was organized into eight vocational regions, each with a vocational director responsible for vocational program approval and evaluation.

Schools were also organized into 57 educational service regions, each comprising several school districts. Each service region had a superintendent who acted as a liaison between the state education office and the school districts.

Vocational education was provided to secondary students in several ways in addition to being offered by a single high school. These options included: (1) area secondary vocational centers, (2) joint agreements between school districts to share vocational programs (3) contracts with community colleges for vocational education, (4) informal arrangements to send students to another school on a tuition basis for vocational courses, and (5) satellite and network systems involving multiple clusters of schools.

The 32 area secondary vocational centers had been organized more or less without an overall state plan. They were required to have a central facility and a minimum population in the geographic area served. Reimbursement by the state beyond a base level depended on program characteristics. In 1982 programs in area secondary vocational centers received 75 percent reimbursement beyond the base level for each student credit hour generated and 70 percent additional reimbursement on equipment.

Under the joint agreement option, provided for by Illinois Public Act 79-802 of 1975 which amended Section 17-1 of the School Code of Illinois, schools agreed to cooperate in offering vocational programs without forming a vocational center. Programs received 30 percent reimbursement beyond the base level for each student credit hour and no added equipment reimbursement. Joint agreements were most prevalent in southern Illinois, where 70 percent of the schools were involved in such an agreement.

The option of providing secondary vocational programs through contracts with community colleges was facilitated by the Illinois tax structure, which taxed school districts to support community colleges. Strict rules governed the application of credit to a student's high school program, and in some instances the credit earned was held "in escrow" to be applied to the student's college degree. Examples of this option in 1982 were reported in the communities of Sandoval, Kashaskia, Palestine, Benton, and Ren Lake.

Schools sending students to another secondary school on a tuition basis did not receive additional reimbursement from the state. This fact suggests that the state did not consider such arrangements to represent inter-school district cooperation, since Illinois policy stated that the purpose of additional reimbursement was to:

> 1) provide an incentive for local school districts to cooperatively provide vocational education for all students more efficiently and effectively, and
>
> 2) give additional support to reduce local funds needed for administrative and operational costs in operating programs through such cooperative arrangements.[1]

[1]Illinois Office of Education, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, "Policy on Reimbursement for Special Organization Factor."

Satellite and network structures were under development in Illinois at the time of the interviews. Because these were vocational systems, they did not have to meet the center population size and central facility requirements.

A satellite structure called the "Five County Regional Vocational System" was being formed under a joint agreement in southern Illinois to provide 11th and 12th grade students with vocational education programs. It provided eight programs to eight school districts in one service region. Some of the schools had been previously involved in a joint agreement providing six programs. There were two satellites in the system, one serving a cluster of six districts and the second serving two districts 37 miles away. Curriculum was system-based; participation costs were satellite-based.

A network of joint agreements was being developed involving four counties. As in the case of the satellite structure, the educational service region superintendent was the administrative agent. Nine unit districts (i.e., K-12 school districts resulting from the merger of elementary and high school districts) were members. The nine superintendents, one representative from each of the nine local boards, community college deans, correctional center deans, and the director of the Special Education District (a consortium of school districts cooperating to provide special education services) comprised the regional board of control. A correctional institution and a community college in the region provided vocational education services to member schools.

The board met quarterly. The board chairperson was elected, in contrast to the satellite structure, where the educational service region superintendent served as chairperson. Board functions and fiscal arrangements were similar to those of the satellite regional system. The curriculum was to include programs in agriculture, business, health, home economics, and industrial education for junior and senior high school students. Numbers of students in grades 9-12 in the nine unit districts ranged from 290 to 2,524.

Five of the schools shared programs prior to the formation of the regional network system. The network was intended to extend programs available to only some of the schools to all nine districts. A system director was to be added to coordinate the agreement among the schools. Schools with existing joint agreements would receive state reimbursement at the 75 percent level rather than the 30 percent level provided for regular joint agreements. The state encouraged but did not require a school to offer all five vocational service areas to be eligible for reimbursement.

In summary, several approaches to providing vocational education to secondary students existed or were under development in Illinois. School districts without enough students for a center used the joint agreement or some other approach to increase their ability to offer vocational education programs.

Geography

The schools involved in this study were located approximately 100 miles east of St. Louis, Missouri in Wayne, Richland, and Clay counties of Illinois. The five unit school districts and communities were Flora, Louisville, Clay City, Cisne and Noble.

There was much oil well drilling and oil development activity in the area, amounting to $31.7 million in receipts in Wayne County and $9 million dollars in Richland County in 1976. The topography was flat to gently rolling. The soil was silt loam with heavy clay subsoil. The average farm size was about 264 acres and land prices ranged from $1,000 to $2,900 per acre. Few farms were 100 percent tillable; fields were interspersed with wooded areas.

The average annual rainfall in the area was approximately 40 inches, and the average annual snowfall was 16 inches. The coldest month was January with an average temperature of 29 degrees Fahrenheit and the warmest month was July with an average temperature of 79 degrees Fahrenheit.

Population Characteristics

Table 2 presents the population of Clay, Wayne and Richland counties. Population declined in Clay and Wayne counties between 1950 and 1970 by almost 3000 and 4000 persons, respectively. All three counties experienced population increases between 1970 and 1980 varying from almost 4 percent to 6 percent. Projections for population increases in the 1980s and 1990s ranged from 1 percent to 9 percent. The documented and projected population increases likely reflect in part the oil activity in the area. These counties had smaller populations than most counties in the state (64 counties had a population of 18,100 or more and 24 counties had less than 15,298 persons).

Table 2. Population trends and projections for Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1950-2000.

Year	County								
	Clay			Richland			Wayne		
	N	Difference	Percent Change	N	Difference	Percent Change	N	Difference	Percent Change
1950	17445	--	--	16889	--	--	20933	--	--
1960	15815	-1630	-10.3	16299	-590	-3.6	19008	-1925	-10.1
1970	14713	-1102	-7.5	16817	518	+3.1	16996	-2012	-11.8
1980	15298	585	+3.8	17597	780	+4.4	18072	1076	+6.0
*1990	16811	1513	+9.0	18413	818	+4.4	18420	348	+1.9
*2000	16977	166	+1.0	19586	1171	+6.0	18965	545	+2.9

*Projected

Source: 1970 U.S. Census and Illinois Population Projections, Revised, 1981, State of Illinois Bureau of the Budget.

Table 3 shows births and deaths in Clay, Richland and Wayne counties between 1970 and 1980. Births exceeded deaths except in Clay County in 1978 and Wayne County in 1976.

Table 3. Births and deaths in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1970-1980.

	County					
	Clay		Richland		Wayne	
Year	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths	Births	Deaths
1970	222	218	267	193	255	176
1976	197	189	243	175	175	223
1977	217	192	250	183	242	196
1978	217	231	279	208	267	206
1979	245	187	238	181	249	225
1980	240	196	257	185	247	236

Source: Illinois Population Projections, 1970-2025, Revised, 1981, Illinois Bureau of the Budget.

Table 4 characterizes the five communities studied. Flora was the largest with a population of 5,379 and Cisne was the smallest with a population of 705. Clay County contained three of the five municipalities. Wayne and Richland counties contained one each.

Table 4. Population of the communities in which the five school districts were located, 1980.

Community	Population	County
Flora	5,379	Clay
Louisville	1,166	Clay
Clay City	1,038	Clay
Noble	832	Richland
Cisne	705	Wayne

Source: Illinois Population Projections, 1970-2025, Revised 1981, Illinois Bureau of the Budget.

Table 5 presents the age distribution of the population in the three counties. About 30 percent of the population was under 19 years old, about 52 percent to 55 percent was 19 to 64 years, and approximately 14 to 16 percent was 65 years and older.

Table 5. Population distribution by age and sex in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1980.

Age Range (years)	Population					
	Clay		Richland		Wayne	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Under 19	4868	31.8	5403	30.7	5382	29.8
19-64	8038	52.6	9730	55.3	9830	54.4
65+	2392	15.6	2464	14.0	2860	15.8
Total	15298	100	17597	100	18072	100

Source: Illinois Population Projections, 1970-2025, Revised, 1981, Illinois Bureau of the Budget.

Table 6 shows population growth by age group from 1975 to 1980. Population growth occurred in the under nine, the 20-29, the 30-39 and the 65 + age groups and declined in the 10-19 and 45-64 age groups. Overall, decline was greater than growth for the school-age population during the five-year period.

Table 7 shows the distribution of the population between urban and rural areas in 1980. From 48.7 percent to 67 percent of the population in the counties studied was classified as rural.

Table 6. Population change by age group for Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1975-1980.

Age Group	Clay County			Richland County			Wayne County		
	1975 N	1980 N	Percent Change	1975 N	1980 N	Percent Change	1975 N	1980 N	Percent Change
Under 9	2176	2175	-.0	2486	2495	+.4	2445	2480	+1.5
10-19	2761	2693	-2.5	3348	2908	-13.1	3100	2902	-6.4
20-29	2148	2716	+20.9	2573	3279	+21.5	2357	3174	+25.7
30-44	2061	2396	+14.0	2816	2967	+5.1	2557	2914	+12.3
45-64	3243	2926	-10.8	3643	3484	-4.4	4025	3742	-7.0
65+	2440	2392	-2.0	2366	2464	+4.0	2752	2860	+3.8
Total	14829	15298	+3.1	17232	17597	+4.6	17236	18072	+2.1

Source: Illinois Population Projections, 1970-2025, Revised, 1981, Illinois Bureau of the Budget.

Table 7. Urban and rural population of Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1980.

	Urban		Rural	
	1980 Total	Percent of Total Population	1980 Total	Percent of Total Population
Clay	5,379	35.2	9,904	64.8
Richland	9,026	51.3	8,561	48.7
Wayne	5,954	33.0	12,105	67.0

Source: U.S. Census, Number of Inhabitants, 1980.

Table 8. Land area and population of Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1980.

County	Square Miles	Population	Population Per Square Mile
Clay	469	15,283	32.6
Richland	360	17,587	48.9
Wayne	715	18,059	25.3

Source: U.S. Census, Number of Inhabitants, 1980.

Table 8 shows the population density in the study area. Richland County, which had the largest urban population, had the smallest land area (360 square miles) and the highest population density of the three counties. Wayne County, which had the largest rural and total population had the largest land area (715 square miles) and the lowest population density. Clay County ranked between Richland and Wayne counties in land area and population density.

Table 9 presents the population by race. The predominant ethnic group was white.

Table 9. Population of Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties by race, 1980.

County	Total	White	Black	American Indian	Eskimo	Japanese	Chinese	Filipino
Clay	15283	15222	0	22	0	2	0	4
Richland	17587	17435	12	23	0	4	1	11
Wayne	18059	17952	6	25	1	5	0	8

County	Korean	Asian Indian	Vietnamese	Other
Clay	6	3	0	24
Richland	1	23	7	71
Wayne	5	15	16	26

Source: U.S. Census, Number of Inhabitants, 1980.

Flora, the largest of the five communities, was more than seven times larger than Cisne, the smallest. Over half the population in all counties were working-age adults. More than half the population in the total three-county area was rural.

Economic Characteristics

Table 10 shows the median family income and the percentage of families with income below the poverty level in the study area. Richland County had the highest median income ($17,552) and the lowest percentage of families with incomes below poverty level (10.0). Clay County had the lowest median income ($14,785) and the highest percentage (14.6) of families with incomes below the poverty level.

Table 10. Median income and percent income level of families in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1979.

County	Median Income	Percent with Income Below Poverty Level
Clay	$14,785	14.6
Richland	17,552	10.0
Wayne	16,004	10.5

Source: U.S. Census, Summary of Economic Characteristics, 1980.

Table 11 shows the monthly unemployment rates for 1977 and 1981 for the three counties. Clay County had the highest average unemployment rate of the three counties in 1977. The 1981 unemployment rate was nearly the same for all three counties.

Table 11. Monthly unemployment rates for Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1977 and 1981.

	Clay % Unemployment		Richland % Unemployment		Wayne % Unemployment	
Month	1977	1981	1977	1981	1977	1981
January	15.9	14.0	8.7	13.3	10.4	12.1
February	15.4	11.5	9.0	9.1	10.1	10.7
March	14.0	11.1	8.5	9.3	9.1	10.3
April	11.5	8.8	6.3	7.1	7.1	8.5
May	9.3	9.1	5.8	6.8	6.3	8.6
June	13.4	8.7	8.5	7.4	9.3	9.0
July	11.3	6.3	8.1	6.3	8.1	7.8
August	13.1	6.7	7.0	6.5	8.3	8.3
September	11.0	8.4	6.5	6.1	7.4	8.1
October	12.1	7.3	6.8	5.9	7.3	8.1
November	12.5	8.7	8.3	7.0	8.2	8.9
December	12.8	10.5	12.1	11.6	8.5	9.6
Average	12.7	9.2	7.9	8.0	8.3	9.2

Source: U.S. Census, Summary of Economic Characteristics, 1980.

Educational Characteristics

Table 12 shows educational levels of residents 25 years and older. The three counties had a lower percentage of high school and college graduates than the state as a whole and a median educational level below that of the general and rural population in Illinois.

Table 12. Years of school completed for residents 25 years of age and older in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties and Illinois, 1980.

County	% Less Than 5 Years	% High School Graduates	% Four or More Years of College	Median Years Completed
Clay	2.1	50.9	6.0	12.0
Richland	0.8	60.1	10.3	12.3
Wayne	2.4	49.9	6.1	12.0
State (Total)	2.8	66.5	16.2	12.5
State (Rural)	1.0	65.9	8.9	12.4

Source: 1980 Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Part 15, Illinois, August 1983.

The most commonly mentioned postsecondary schools in the area were the Olney Community College, located in the city of Olney 8 to 25 miles east of the communities, and the University of Southern Illinois at Carbondale, about 115 miles southwest of the study area. Olney offered vocational courses in nursing and building trades. Other community colleges offering vocational programs in the area included Robbinsen campus, which offered programs in chef training, drafting, and nursing; and Wabash, which offered motor repair and maintenance and nursing programs. Night courses were available at each community college and at a fourth campus at Fairfield.

Social Characteristics

Table 13 shows the marital status of residents. The marital dissolution rate was higher for each of the three counties than for the state as a whole.

Table 13. Marital status of residents of Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties and Illinois, 1980.

County	Marital Status		
	Marriages	Divorces	Dissolution Ratio
Clay	149	88	59.1
Richland	222	128	57.7
Wayne	193	106	54.9
Illinois	109,823	50,728	46.4

Source: Illinois Department of Public Health (Mimeograph), 1980.

Table 14 compares selected social characteristics of the three counties with the state as a whole and with urban and rural populations in the state. Very few people in the three counties

Table 14. General social characteristics of residents of Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties and Illinois populations, 1980.

County	% Foreign Born	% Born in Illinois	% 60 Years of Age and Over Living Alone	% of Families With Own Children Under Age 6	% of Persons Under Age 18 Living With Two Parents
Clay	0.2	86.9	27.2	21.6	86.2
Richland	0.9	83.9	27.5	21.4	87.5
Wayne	0.6	86.6	26.1	20.0	85.7
State (Total)	7.2	74.3	25.1	22.9	75.8
State (Urban)	8.4	72.8	25.7	22.8	73.1
State (Rural)	1.3	81.6	22.3	23.0	88.3

Source: 1980 Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics Part 15, Illinois, August 1983.

were foreign born. A higher percentage were born in Illinois than was true for the state as a whole and for the state's total rural population. A higher percentage of elderly persons lived alone in the three counties than was the case for the state's urban, rural, or total population. A slightly smaller percentage of families had young children in the three counties than in the state as a whole. The percentage of persons under age eighteen living with two parents in the three counties was higher than that for the state's urban or total population but slightly lower than that for the state's rural population.

Agricultural Characteristics

The three counties reflected agricultural characteristics of the entire southern Illinois region. Overall production was lower than most of the rest of the state.

Table 15 reveals the number and average size of farms in the three counties. The average farm size was similar for the three counties, ranging from 242 to 262 acres.

Table 15. Number of farms, total farm acreage, and average farm acreage for Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1977.

County	Farms		
	Number	Acreage	Average Acreage
Clay	868	227,106	262
Richland	738	187,202	254
Wayne	1,476	357,274	242

Source: Illinois and the U.S. departments of agriculture.

Table 16 shows the size distribution of farms in 1969 and 1974. In all three counties the largest category was 99 acres or less. The 260-499 acre range was generally the second largest category. A comparison of the data for 1969 and 1974 reveals that farms were generally increasing in size and decreasing in number. This trend is substantiated by farm size data for 1977 (Table 15).

Hogs and beef dominated the livestock enterprises. Table 17 shows that Wayne County marketed two to three times as many cattle and calves and more hogs than either Clay or Richland counties in 1978 and 1979. Livestock marketing in Clay and Richland counties was comparable to or below that of the other 15 counties in their region. In contrast, Wayne County marketed nearly two and three times as many hogs and cattle, respectively, as the rest of the 12-county district.

Major crops in the area were corn, soybeans, and winter wheat. Table 18 shows the production and sale of these crops in the three counties. Clay and Richland counties produced less of these three major crops than Wayne County, which marketed greater numbers of livestock. Generally, about half of the corn crop and almost all of the soybean and wheat crops were sold.

Table 19 reflects the total receipts from farm marketings in the three counties for 1978 and 1979. Receipts for each of the counties were well below statewide county averages.

Summary

Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties in southeastern Illinois comprised the setting for a joint agreement noncenter arrangement among the schools of Flora, Cisne, Louisville, Clay City, and Noble to provide vocational education courses for their students.

Table 16. Distribution of farms in acreage categories in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1969-1974.

Farm Size	Number of Farms					
	Clay		Richland		Wayne	
	1974	1969	1974	1969	1974	1969
1-99 Acres	286	356	239	313	534	562
100-179 Acres	178	226	132	179	317	313
180-259 Acres	111	189	101	130	168	239
260-499 Acres	199	245	180	243	275	336
500-999 Acres	90	84	71	80	165	144
1000 Acres and over	15	4	12	4	33	26
Average Acres per Farm	236	212	239	224	244	229
Total County Farm Acreage	876	1104	735	949	1492	1620

Source: U.S. Census, Census of Agriculture, 1974.

Table 17. Cattle and hog marketings in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties and selected districts in Illinois, 1978 and 1979.

County and Year	Livestock	
	Cattle and Calves	Hogs
15-County East Southeast District Average, 1979	7,070	79,730
Clay County		
1978	7,500	61,000
1979	7,300	72,000
Richland County		
1978	5,100	40,000
1979	5,000	47,000
12-County Southeast District Average, 1979	6,580	39,170
Wayne County		
1978	16,700	75,000
1979	16,700	78,000

Source: Illinois Agricultural Statistics, Farm Income and Marketings, 1980, With Comparison, Illinois Crop Reporting Service, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bulletin 81-4.

Table 18. Corn, soybeans, and wheat production and sale in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties, 1978 and 1979.

County and Year	Crop (bu)		
	Corn	Soybean	Wheat
Clay County			
1978			
Produced	4,309,000	2,647,000	848,000
Sold	2,462,000	2,618,000	795,000
1979			
Produced	4,319,000	3,187,000	964,000
Sold	2,345,000	3,172,000	920,000
Richland County			
1978			
Produced	5,644,000	2,088,000	368,000
Sold	3,812,000	2,065,000	349,000
1979			
Produced	6,433,000	2,570,000	432,000
Sold	4,152,000	2,558,000	412,000
Wayne County			
1978			
Produced	6,118,000	3,352,000	976,000
Sold	3,826,000	3,298,000	917,000
1979			
Produced	7,973,000	5,588,000	1,203,000
Sold	5,534,000	5,535,000	1,160,000

Source: Illinois Agricultural Statistics, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bulletins 80-4 and 81-4.

Table 19. Total receipts from farm marketings in Clay, Richland, and Wayne counties and Illinois county average, 1978 and 1979.

County	Total Receipts	
	1978	1979
Clay	$39,177,000	$41,202,000
Richland	31,983,000	34,006,000
Wayne	58,707,000	59,865,000
Illinois County Average	64,183,780	68,511,650

Source: Illinois Agricultural Statistics, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bulletins 80-4 and 81-4.

Summary

This area of the state was largely agricultural, producing both crops and livestock. Oil production, a more recent venture, provided additional income and was a likely factor in land values that reached almost $3,000 per acre.

Employment was spread across agriculture, oil, manufacturing, and other business enterprises. The majority of the population was rural and of working age. The counties had a higher-than-average marriage dissolution rate than the state as a whole.

The population of the area was projected to increase. Assuming these increases would be in the working age sector because of the oil "boom," demands on educational, health, and other service systems would be expected to increase.

Flora, the largest of the five communities involved in the joint agreement, was the source of employment for much of the area's population. Cisne, the smallest community, was located in Wayne County, the most agricultural of the three counties.

CHAPTER III

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

This chapter provides an overview of each of the school districts included in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement. Sources of data were state agency reports; direct observations by the researchers; and on-site interviews with school district administrators and staff, school board members, and advisory committee members who were area residents.

School districts are described in terms of size, facilities, finances, governance and management policies, staffing, scheduling and courses offered, students, and perceptions by area residents. Data for the West Richland Community Unit at Noble, which entered into the joint agreement in 1980, are slightly less extensive than for the other four districts because only the superintendent was interviewed in that district.

Each school district involved in the joint agreement courses had formed a unit district by merging its elementary and high school districts. The location of each of the five unit school districts is indicated in Table 20.

Table 20. Locations of joint agreement school districts.

School District	Community	County
Flora	Flora	Clay
North Clay	Louisville	Clay
Clay City	Clay City	Clay
North Wayne	Cisne	Wayne
West Richland	Noble	Richland

The schools shared other services in addition to vocational curricula. They were members of a regional cooperative which provided school psychological services and services for special needs children. North Clay students enrolled in physics at Flora. The North Wayne district reported plans to cooperate with Fairfield, a neighboring school, for drivers' training.

Size

Table 21 compares the geographic area of each district. North Clay and North Wayne were the largest districts and West Richland was the smallest.

The number of households in each district is presented in Table 22. Flora had the smallest percentage of households with children (37%) while Clay City had the highest percentage (58%) among the districts reporting these data.

Student enrollment by grade level for the 1980-81 and 1981-82 school years is presented in Table 23. Flora had the largest and West Richland had the smallest school enrollments. North

Table 21. Geographical area of joint agreement.

School District	Area Square Miles
Flora	171
North Clay	206
North Wayne	202
Clay City	142
West Richland	122

Source: School district superintendents.

Table 22. Total number of households and number of households with school-age children in the joint agreement school districts.

School District	Total Number of Households	Number of Households With Children
Flora	2,700	1,000
North Clay	846	456
North Wayne	732	379
Clay City	556	325
West Richland	NA[1]	NA

[1]Not available

Source: School district superintendents.

Clay's enrollment was about half of Flora's and North Wayne and Clay City enrollments were about one-third of Flora's. Some schools lost more students than they gained through migration. Others held constant in terms of net migration. Flora reported an average of 105 students transferring into the school district per year and 130 transferring out; North Wayne, 48 in and 47 out; North Clay, 42 in and 57 out; Clay City, 5 in and 5 out; and West Richland, about 40 students in and 40 out.

The density of the student population, calculated as the ratio of numbers of students to geographic area, gives some indication of the transportation demands on a district. Pupil densities for the five school districts are shown in Table 24. Flora's student population was the most concentrated and North Wayne's was the least concentrated.

Table 23. Joint agreement school district K-12 enrollments, 1980-81 and 1981-82.

School District and Grade	Enrollment 1980-81	Enrollment 1981-82
Flora		
Kindergarten	101	120
Grades 1-6	671	646
Grades 7-12	786	751
Total	1,558	1,517
North Clay		
Kindergarten	75	66
Grades 1-6	343	353
Grades 7-12	400	373
Total	818	792
North Wayne		
Kindergarten	50	37
Grades 1-6	255	279
Grades 7-12	249	250
Total	554	566
Clay City		
Kindergarten	46	34
Grades 1-6	278	281
Grades 7-12	266	269
Total	599	584
West Richland		
Kindergarten	41	35
Grades 1-6	247	270
Grades 7-12	245	241
Total	533	546

Source: School district superintendents.

The proportion of K-12 students transported to and from school by bus was 50 percent for Flora, 82 percent for North Wayne, 90 percent for North Clay, 80 percent for Clay City, and 80 percent for West Richland. Flora operated 14 school buses; North Wayne, 10; North Clay 16; Clay City 8; and West Richland 9.

Average class size in vocational and nonvocational courses for the five school districts is reported in Table 25. Vocational classes were smaller than nonvocational classes in all five schools.

Table 24. Pupil density, joint agreement school districts, 1981-82.

School District	1981-82 Total School Enrollment	School District Area	Pupils/Square Mile
Flora	1,517	171	8.87
North Clay	792	206	3.84
North Wayne	566	202	2.80
Clay City	584	142	4.11
West Richland	546	122	4.48

Source: School district superintendents.

Table 25. Average class size of high school classes in joint agreement school districts.

	Average Class Size	
School District	Vocational Courses	Nonvocational Courses
Flora	15	20
North Clay	11.3	18.7
North Wayne	15	18
Clay City	16	18
West Richland	12.5	18.9

Source: School district superintendents.

Facilities

The Flora District was organized as an elementary, junior high, and senior high district. It had six school buildings: one high school, one junior high school, and four elementary schools. The high school housed grades 9-12. It had been rebuilt after a recent fire, so parts of the building were only a year old whereas other parts were 25 and 43 years old. The junior high school housed grades 7 and 8 and was 12 years old.

Three elementary schools were located in Flora. McEndree (65 years old with a 25-year-old addition) housed grades K-6. Lincoln housed grades 1-8 and was 26 years old. Seminary housed grades 1-5 and was 32 years old. Xenia school, a fourth elementary school, housed grades K-8 and was located in the small neighboring community of Xenia. The superintendent's office was in a small house located a few blocks from the high school. The high school principal and vocational director offices were located in the high school.

North Wayne was organized as an elementary school, middle school and high school district. It had four school buildings. Two elementary schools, both 28 years old, housed grades K-4. One was

located at Mt. Erie and one at Johnsville, both small communities near Cisne. A middle school housing grades 5-8 and a high school housing grades 9-12 were located at Cisne. The superintendent's office was in the middle school, one and a half blocks from the high school. The high school principal's office was in the high school.

The Clay City schools were organized as an elementary (K-5), middle school (6-8), and high school (9-12) system. Buildings included an elementary facility built in 1932 and a high school built in 1940. The elementary facility housed both the elementary and the middle school students. A new unit housing the superintendent's office was constructed near the high school in 1974.

The West Richland system was organized as an elementary (K-6), junior high (7-8), high school (9-12) district. The main high school building was constructed in 1939 with a career-media center addition in 1979. An elementary building was constructed in 1968 across town from the high school.

North Clay was organized as a K-6, 7-8, 9-12 district. One elementary school had 18- and 24-year-old sections. A second building housed elementary, junior high, and senior high students and had sections that were 4, 19, and 34 years old. The superintendent's office was in a new building behind the high school.

None of the schools had plans for new construction or additions.

Finances

Flora officials indicated their district's financial condition had improved as the result of efficiencies gained in moving to the unit districts and the decision to tax at the highest legal rate. North Wayne officials indicated that their district received oil company funds that allowed them to do things they would not otherwise be able to do.

Total school expenditures, per-pupil maintenance cost, capital outlay, and debt service for the five school districts is shown in Table 26.

There is a wide variation among the school districts. Flora's building replacement is reflected in its relatively large capital outlay, which includes capital equipment, buildings, and sites. Flora's debt service (i.e., expenditures for retirement of bonds and state loans) was the highest whereas North Wayne and Clay City reported no expenditures in this category. Total school expenditures reflect the size of the school districts in terms of enrollments, staff and programs. Flora had the highest total expenditures, North Clay the second highest, and the other three schools similarly lower total expenditures.

Table 26. Total expenditures, per-pupil maintenance cost, capital outlay, and debt service for joint agreement school districts, 1980-81.

School District	Total Expenditures	Per Pupil Maintenance	Capital Outlay	Debt Service
Flora	$3,778,437	$2,730	$128,603	$190,861
North Clay	1,860,469	75	2,062	91,422
North Wayne	1,344,171	435	21,432	0
Clay City	1,076,701	1,868	10,825	0
West Richland	1,145,561	2,137	30,435	40,000

Source: School district superintendents.

Governance, Management, Policies

Each school district was run as an independent school district with its own governance board and a superintendent acting as executive officer. The elected school boards had the power to levy local taxes within limitations set by Illinois law.

The percent of eligible voters who typically voted in school elections ranged from 34 percent in North Wayne to 10 to 12 percent in Flora, North Clay, and Clay City.

Staff

Teaching and administrative staff sizes for the five school districts are reported in Tables 27 and 28. Flora had two or more times as many full-time equivalent (FTE) administrators at each administrative level than the other schools, reflecting its larger student enrollments and teaching staff. The other four districts had very similar administrative staffing patterns.

Table 27. Number of full-time equivalent administrative staff, joint agreement school districts, 1981-82.

School District	High School	Junior High or Middle School	Elementary	District-Wide	Total
Flora	2	1	3	2	8
North Clay	1	0.5	0.5	1	3
North Wayne	1	0.5	0.5	1	3
Clay City	1	0.5	0.5	1	3
West Richland	1	0	1	1	3

Source: School district superintendents.

Teaching staff reflected enrollment patterns in the five school districts with Flora having the highest number of FTE teachers, North Clay the next highest, and the other schools fewer but similar numbers of teaching staff.

Scheduling and Courses Offered

School calendars are shown for the five school districts in Table 29. All had 176 school days. However, starting and ending dates varied.

Daily schedules are shown in Table 30. Starting and ending times varied. Two districts had eight periods in the school day and three districts had seven periods.

The Flora and North Wayne schools used matrix scheduling, in which student interests were identified and then a master schedule was developed. Students could choose courses from the offerings available provided they had the necessary prerequisites. Credit was granted on a semester basis in some of the schools and on a full-year basis in others. A mixture of semester and year-long course offerings and once-a-year student scheduling was a found in all districts.

Vocational course offerings were calculated as a percent of total course offerings to evaluate the relative importance of vocational curricula in each of the districts (Table 31). The data

Table 28. Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff, joint agreement school districts, 1980-81 and 1981-82.

School District	1980-81			
	High School	Junior High or Middle School	Elementary	Total
Flora	39	12	60	111
North Clay	16	9	27.5	52.5
North Wayne	15.33	12.17	12.33	39.83
Clay City*	13	6	16	39
West Richland	15	5	16	36

School District	1981-82			
	High School	Junior High or Middle School	Elementary	Total
Flora	36	12	61	109
North Clay	16	9	28.5	53.5
North Wayne	15.33	12.50	13.33	41.16
Clay City*	12	6	16	38
West Richland	15	5	6	36

Source: School district superintendents.
* In addition to the numbers reported, four teachers had assignments that were split across grade level categories.

Table 29. School calendars, joint agreement school districts, 1981-82.

School District	Starting Date	Ending Date	Days/Year
Flora	Two weeks before Labor Day	June 3	176
North Clay	August 24	June 3	176
North Wayne	One week before Labor Day	Friday before Memorial Day	176
Clay City	Third week in August	Friday before Memorial Day	176
West Richland	Last week in August	Friday before Memorial Day	176

Source: School district superintendents.

reveal that vocational courses comprise about 43 to 56 percent of the total course offerings in the five schools.[1]

Table 30. Daily schedules, joint agreement school districts, 1981-82.

School District	Start Time	End Time	Periods Per Day	Length of Periods
Flora	8:21 a.m.	3:13 p.m.	8	50
North Clay	8:23 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	8	52
North Wayne	8:30 a.m.	3:10 p.m.	7	50
Clay City	8:25 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	7	50
West Richland	8:20 a.m.	3:05 p.m.	7	55

Source: School district superintendents.

Table 31. Number of vocational course offerings (including joint agreement courses) in relation to total senior high course offerings in joint agreement school districts, 1981-82.

School District	Total Number of Courses[1]	Number of Vocational Courses	Vocational Total (Percent)
Flora	107	47	43.5
North Clay	81	46	56.8
North Wayne	74	40	54.1
Clay City	94	53	56.4
West Richland	67	31	46.3

[1]Includes quarter, semester, and year-long classes.

Flora offered 107 courses for grades 10-12 in 1981-82, including band, chorus, drivers' training, and work study. Students in grades 9-12 had a maximum of one study period per day. The standard class load was five subjects plus physical education. The distribution of requirements and electives differed among grade levels. Requirements decreased from three in grade 9 (leaving two electives) to two in grade 11 (three electives) and one in grade 12 (four electives).

[1]Vocational is used here to identify vocational subject areas and does not necessarily include only courses that were vocationally reimbursed.

North Wayne offered 74 courses for grades 9-12 including band and chorus but not drivers' training. Student schedules allowed one study hall and six class hours. Students were required to carry five academic credits per year. Grade 9 had four requirements and two electives while grade 11 had three requirements and three electives and grade 12 had two requirements and four electives.

Ninth and tenth graders established their schedules through group and individual meetings with counselors in Flora and on a group basis at North Wayne. In both schools, counselors met with students in 11th and 12th grades. Students in both schools planned tentative four-year programs.

Four programs combining work and school were available to junior and senior students at Flora: special education work study (4 males and 3 females enrolled), cooperative career education (48 males and 39 females enrolled), CETA (4 males enrolled) and work study (7 males and 5 females enrolled). North Wayne reported one such program, an Illinois Farmers' Union program which enrolled two females.

North Clay offered 81 courses, including 46 vocational courses. Clay City offered 94 courses, 53 of which were vocational. Of 67 courses offered by West Richland, 31 were vocational.

The wide array of vocational curricula offered by the five school districts is shown in Table 33. Asterisks represent curricular additions via joint agreement courses.

Curriculum was reportedly initiated and revised in all school districts through the cooperative efforts of the teacher and the principal.

Adult education courses were offered at North Wayne, Clay City and Flora. In North Wayne, a summer CETA program was available for students.

Community colleges offering evening vocational programs were located near the joint agreement schools. Several high school vocational instructors taught at the community colleges in the evenings and the summers. Since high school students in Illinois could enroll in community college courses, some students took a course similar to one offered through the joint agreement program from the community college and the same instructor. These students could not, however, use the community college offerings to fulfill high school requirements.

Students

No minority students were reported in any of the school districts. Special needs students had access to specialist assistance and were mainstreamed in the vocational areas.

Student dropout rates were about 6 percent in Flora, 5 percent in North Wayne, 4 percent in North Clay and 3 to 5 percent in Clay City. Reasons for dropping out included poor academic performance, lack of family support for staying in school, and a family pattern of dropping out.

Intense post-high-school planning, including enrolling in courses prerequisite to post high school education and submitting admission and scholarship applications, occurred in the 11th and 12th grades in all of the schools. Career planning activities included a college fair in Flora to which students from surrounding schools were invited, visits to colleges and other post-secondary schools, and visits by college and trade school representatives. Flora also held a career day to which all joint agreement schools were invited.

Seniors in Illinois could enroll tuition-free in community college courses. This option allowed students to explore an area of study in more depth while still in high school.

One school indicated that the best academic students did not take vocational subjects, although they were available to these students. Another school indicated that since the joint agreement courses were made available, enrollment had increased in school district courses that were prerequisites for joint agreement courses.

Extracurricular activities involved 65 percent of the student body in Flora, 25 percent in North Wayne, 95 percent in Clay City, 65 to 70 percent in North Clay and 25 percent in West Richland.

Table 32. Senior high vocational curriculum offered by joint agreement school districts.

Course	Flora	North Clay	North Wayne	Clay City	West Richland
Business					
Bookkeeping					X
Cooperative Education	X	*	*	*	*
Office Practice				X	X
Executive Secretary	X		X		
Accounting I	X	X	X	X	
Accounting II	X	X		X	
Shorthand I	X	X	X	X	X
Shorthand II		X		X	
Typing I	X	X	X	X	X
Typing II	X	X	X	X	X
Personal Typing		X			
Data Processing	X				X
Computer I					X
Computer II					X
Recordkeeping	X				
Consumer Education		X			X
General Business	X	X	X	X	X
Business Law		X			
Clerical Practice	X				X
Agriculture					
Coop		X			
Intro. to Agriculture		X		X	X
Farm Business Management	X		X		X
Agriculture Business Mgt.					X
Agricultural Production	X		X		
Advanced Animal Science		X			
Agricultural Orientation	X		X		
Horticulture		X			
Soil Management	X		X		
Advanced Plant Science		X			
Plant and Animal Science		X			
Auto Mechanics		X			
Agricultural Resources			X		
Agriculture Chemical		X			
Agricultural Mechanics	X		X		X
Agricultural Supply & Serivce		X			
Agricultural Power Machinery	X	X	X		
Small Engine Repair	X	X			X
Special Problems in Ag		X			
Agricultural Electrification			X		
Advanced Electricity		X			
Welding and Cutting	X		X		X
Advanced Welding	*	X	*	*	*
Prevocational Electricity				X	
Welding I				X	
Farm Management				X	
Power Mechanics				X	
Agricultural Construction				X	
Farm Equipment Repair and Construction				X	

*Available through joint agreement.

Table 32. (continued).

Courses	Flora	North Clay	North Wayne	Clay City	West Richland
Supervised Agr. Experience Prog.		X		X	
Conservation, Ecology & Ag		X			
Intro. Welding and Electricity		X			X
Farm Mechanics Maintenance					X
Industrial					
Prevocational Electricity				X	
Prevocational Metals				X	
Prevocational Woods				X	
Prevocational Drafting				X	
Metalworking		X		X	X
Building Trades I	X	*	*	*	*
Building Trades II	X	*	*	*	*
Woodworking I	X				X
Woodworking Technology		X		X	
Woodworking II	X				
Adv. Woodwork & Cabinetmaking		X			
Cabinetmaking	X				
Industrial Education Orientation	X	X	X	X	X
Architectural Drafting	X			X	
Drafting Technology		X			
Advanced Architectural Drafting	X				
Basic Electricity	X				
Electrical Technology		X			
Advanced Electricity	X				
House Wiring	X				
Automotive Services	*	*	*	*	*
Automotive Mechanics	*	*	*	*	*
Graphic Arts I	*	*	*	X	*
Graphic Arts II	*	*	*	X	*
Welding I				X	
Vocational Woods				X	
Diversified Metal				X	
Electricity					X
Drafting					X
Home Economics					
Foods					X
Clothing I					X
Introduction to Home Economics					X
Home Economics Orientation		X			
Orientation to Child Care	X				
Personal and Occupational Orientation	X				
Orientation to the World of Fashion and Retailing	X				
Advanced Fashion & Retailing	X				
Orientation to Foods	X		X	X	
Advanced Foods	X		X	X	
Consumer Home Management	X	X	X		
Management of Resources			X		
Parenting & Child Development	X	X	X		
Adult Living	X	X	X		
Singles Living					X
Everyday Living Environment	X		X		

Table 32. (continued).

Courses	Flora	North Clay	North Wayne	Clay City	West Richland
Home Economics (continued)					
Introduction to Textiles and Clothing				X	
Advanced Clothing					
Clothing and Fabric Care				X	
Basic Clothing Construction				X	
Clothing Production		X			
Basic Food Production		X		X	
Health and Nutrition for Children				X	
The Developing Child				X	
Child Care Careers				X	X
Children and The Family				X	
Family Life				X	X
Home Management				X	
Living Environments and Interior Design		X			X
Commercial Food Production and Services		X			
Sewing for Profit		X			
Orientation To Health Occupations		X			
Health Career Skills		X			
Cooperative Health Occupations	X	*	*	*	*
Direct Patient Care Skills	X	*	*	*	*
Health Occupations Orientations	X	*	*	*	*

Source: Student handbooks.

North Wayne reported that 30 percent of the parents of students were engaged in full-time farming and 20 percent were engaged in part-time farming. In March 1982, 42 percent of the 38 North Wayne graduates from 1981 were enrolled in post-secondary education, with 4 graduates attending a four-year, and 12 attending a two-year college. Two were farming or in agriculture-related positions, 13 were working in nonagricultural jobs, and 2 were married (both females). One of those married was working outside the home. None had children and none was in the military. All 38 lived within 30 miles of Cisne.

There were 128 graduates from Flora in 1981. No information was provided regarding the activities of these graduates since the school routinely collected this information the third year after students graduate.

West Richland reported 42 graduates, 21 males and 21 females, for the 1981 school year. Two were attending a four-year college or university, 17 were attending a two-year college, and 2 were attending a vocational technical school for a total of about 50 percent pursuing some type of post-secondary education. Of the remaining 50 percent, 1 was in the armed services, 5 were farming or in agriculture-related activities, 13 were employed in occupations other than agriculture, and 2 were married. Of those who were married, 1 had a child. Thirty-five graduates were living with their parents or within 30 miles of their home community of Noble. Four were living between 30 and 100 miles of home and three were more than 100 miles from home.

Clay City reported 40 graduates, 21 females and 19 males, for 1981. Six graduates were attending a four-year college or university, 7 were attending a two-year college, 9 were attending a vocational-technical school, and 6 were attending business, secretarial, computer, or other specialized institutions for a total of about 70 percent of the graduates continuing their education in some post-secondary institution. Of the other 30 percent, 1 was in the armed services, 2 were in farming or agriculture-related occupations, 9 were working full-time in nonagricultural occupations, and 2 female students were married. None had children.

North Clay had reported 74 graduates in 1981. Five graduates were attending a four-year college or university, 23 were attending a two-year college, and 1 was attending a business, secretarial, computer or other specialized school for a total of 39 percent continuing their education in some post-secondary institution. Of the remaining 61 percent, 2 were in the armed forces, 18 were in farming or other agriculture-related positions, 14 were employed full-time in occupations other than agriculture, 6 were married (all females--3 with children), and 4 females were married and working outside the home.

Perceptions of School Personnel and Community Members

School officials' perceptions of community attitudes and practices concerning the school districts were obtained from interviews.

The Flora community was viewed as showing strong support for the school by attending school events, and by taking action to improve its educational programs. It was perceived as taking pride in and having a strong commitment to maintaining its public school, although the turnout for school elections was reported as being fairly low. The community was perceived as viewing the school to a large extent as a center of social activities for the community.

North Wayne officials reported generally similar community attitudes as Flora except for slightly weaker commitment to improving educational programs.

West Richland school officials reported they felt general community support for the schools.

Clay City officials and citizens reported that the community supported school activities, attended school events, and was interested in the school. A citizen reported that Clay City would fight hard to keep a school.

At North Clay, citizens and school officials indicated that the community attended school events and supported school programs very well and had a great deal of pride in its school system. They said that the school was the center of social activities in the community and people would fight to the bitter end to save it. About the only negative aspect of community support was a light voter turnout.

Summary

All the school districts had experienced some consolidation and so were called community unit districts. They ranged in area from 122 to 206 square miles and in total enrollments from 1,517 students in Flora to 546 in West Richland.

Most of the school facilities were 20 or more years old, and though they were well-maintained, were worn and reflected facilities of earlier eras. Most schools had separate buildings for elementary students.

Expenditure patterns varied widely. Only one school carried a large debt. With the exception of Flora which had eight school administrators, each district had three administrators. Flora also had the largest teaching staff.

School schedules were similar in terms of period lengths and starting and ending dates. All schools had 176 school days. Approximately half of the course offerings were in vocational areas. Both full-year and semester courses were offered.

All students were Caucasian. On the average, half of the 1981 high school graduates pursued some form of post-secondary education and half were working.

In general, while citizens in these communities were reported to support their schools, voter turnouts were reported to be low.

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CHAPTER IV

THE DECENTRALIZED NONCENTER AGREEMENT

History

The Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement inter-school district cooperative arrangement began in 1974 with four school districts which had formed themselves into unit districts (combined elementary and secondary school districts) at about the same time.

The possibility of forming a vocational center had been explored in 1972 as part of a statewide effort to form vocational centers. Representatives from Flora and surrounding communities were interested in the center idea, but a lack of interest on the part of neighboring communities meant that the population needed for establishing a center was not available.

Alternatives were explored. Four districts interested in expanding their vocational education offerings decided to work together under the joint agreement structure available in Illinois. These school districts were Flora Community Unit #35 located at Flora, North Clay Community Unit #25 located at Louisville, North Wayne Community Unit #200 located at Cisne, and Clay City Community Unit #10 located at Clay City.

Each school district identified at least one vocational program it would be willing to share that did not duplicate offerings of the other school districts. (As one official noted, "We didn't want the shared program to compete with programs available to students in their home school.") This nonduplication criterion was a potentially important factor in the perceptions of the schools regarding benefits and costs of cooperating.

The programs and their locations were health occupations, building trades, and cooperative career education (Flora); auto mechanics and auto services (North Wayne); advanced welding (North Clay); and graphic arts (Clay City). North Wayne later added its own cooperative education program.

All of the original districts were still participating in 1982. In 1980 a fifth district, West Richland Community Unit #20 located at Noble, was added at its request. West Richland sent students to the health program in Flora but did not offer any joint agreement courses.

The joint agreement courses appear to have emerged from a combination of events and leadership. A representative from Flora indicated that the move to unit districts and a decision to tax at the highest legal rate provided the financial base the school needed to discontinue contracting for busing services and buy its own bus fleet, making transportation between schools for joint agreement courses feasible.

The movement in Illinois to establish secondary vocational centers, the failure of the four school districts to meet the population criteria for the establishment of a vocational center, the lack of interest by neighboring communities in becoming part of a center, and financial incentives provided by the state were all apparent key elements in the initiation of the joint agreement.

Another factor that can't be ignored is leadership. The Flora home economics teacher, a well-established community, state, and national leader in vocational education advised the neighboring schools as they worked out the details of sharing programs. Her background enabled her to see opportunities for student development in occupational areas. Superintendents and principals in each of the school districts were also instrumental in initiating the joint agreement.

Another element in the situation may have been the communities' attitudes toward each other. The communities were described as closely bound, willing to share what they had for mutual benefit, and lacking attitudes of greed and domination. As one superintendent put it, "If I have a problem I

just call one of my neighbors (schools) and see what we can work out." Two of the superintendents and one school board chairman from schools involved in the joint agreement grew up in the area and graduated from high school together. Such long-term relationships may have contributed to the close feelings among schools and communities.

A final factor contributing to the success of the agreement was the apparent ability of the school administrators to work together. Administrators' descriptions of the ways in which they interacted on problems in general and their recollections of their involvement in initiating the joint agreement reflected a pattern of support and cooperation. Three of the five superintendents at the time of the interviews had been initiators of the joint agreement courses in 1974.

The rationale behind the joint agreement was succinctly stated by one of the individuals interviewed when he said, "We need to provide educational opportunities for our students. If the school district can't do it alone, then the question becomes, 'How can we find the best way at the least cost?'" One administrator said that a basic question schools involved in the joint agreement must confront is, "Do I want my people to participate in other schools?"

Governance, Management, and Legal Structure

Governance and management of the noncenter structure was less formal than in center structures at other sites studied. In the noncenter, these functions were based on existing school organizational structures rather than on separate organizational structures as they were in centers.

The joint agreement legal structure was provided by Illinois law. The five districts operated under the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement (See Appendix A). The stated purpose of this agreement was to provide students with vocational training and experience not available in home schools.

The administrative district was described in the agreement as "those districts operating programs shared under the joint agreement." The administrative district was to provide facilities, equipment, materials, instructors, and supervision for the programs it contributed, including employment, supervision, and evaluation of the teaching staff.

Differences in the administrative-supervisory structures of the participating schools are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4. Figure 3 represents the structure in Flora, in which a vocational director supervised the vocational program. Figure 4 represents the structure in North Wayne, where the principal supervised the vocational program.

Shared programs were governed by an administrative advisory committee, although the ultimate decisionmaking authority for any given program lay with the district that offered the program. The committee was composed of an administrator and a vocational instructor from each participating school district. The function of the committee was to "coordinate the mechanics of the agreement, to articulate all matters pertaining to the operation of the program(s) shared under this agreement, and to recommend changes" (see Appendix A).

The administrative advisory committee and the administrative district were charged with working "with and through" local vocational advisory committees and community and state agencies to further and improve joint agreement programs.

The administrative advisory committee initially met each February to discuss plans, work out details, and exchange payments. However, in later years much of the business was handled by mail or phone instead. Some individuals felt this means of communication tended to perpetuate the status quo and the group should meet regularly and more frequently to generate new ideas and improve the arrangement.

A school district became eligible to participate by approval of the joint agreement and adoption of the Continuing Joint Agreement Resolution by the school district's board of education (See Appendix A). The resolution, a one page form prescribed by the state, activated the legal rights of the district as a member of the joint agreement. All participating schools were required to list every other participating school on their agreement forms and to provide yearly written agreements. The Clay-Wayne County Agreement was a "continuing vocational joint agreement," meaning that districts could renew each year by simply obtaining appropriate signatures from each school district rather than writing a new agreement.

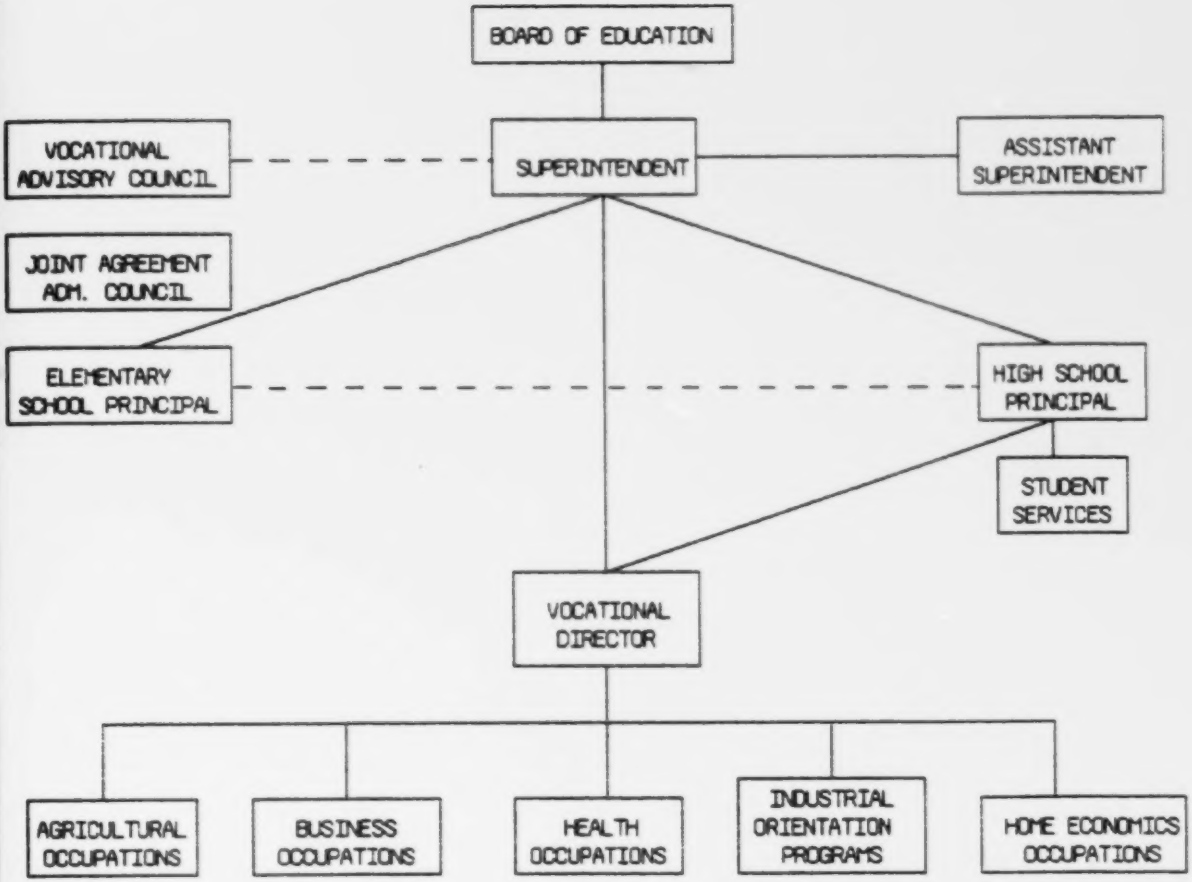

Figure 3. Organizational structure: Flora.

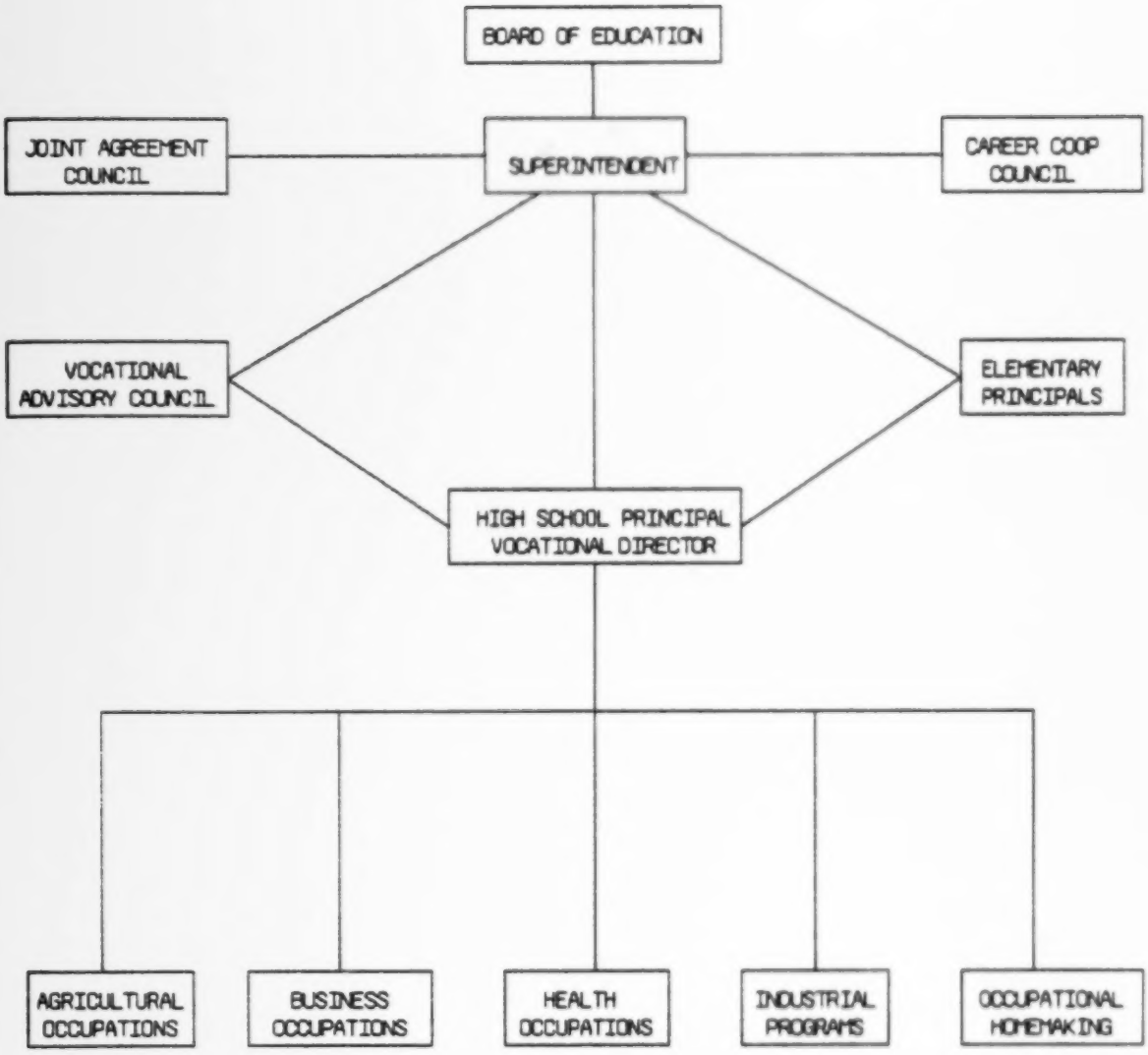

Figure 4. Organizational structure: North Wayne.

Under the joint agreement, each member district could elect to not participate in any classes or programs offered by other districts in any given year. Each district could enroll students in any program offered under this agreement if an invitation to participate was extended by the school offering the program, enrollment space was available, intent to enroll and number to be enrolled were supplied to the administrative district within a reasonable time for planning (preferably in the spring), and, it agreed to pay the administrative district the pro-rata cost for the semester enrolled if a student withdrew after midterm.

Written notification was required by March 15 for withdrawal from the joint agreement, effective at the start of the following school year.

Amendments to the joint agreement could be proposed by any school and required approval by the boards of education of all member schools.

Each school district submitted one- and five-year plans for vocational education to the Illinois Department of Education describing its entire vocational curricula and courses offered through the joint agreement. These plans contained the joint agreement resolution form for each participating school, plans for program improvement, processes to be used for program plann'ng and evaluation, program objectives and content, financial details, and plans for staffing and support services.

The vocational director role under the joint agreement was fulfilled by each district by incorporating joint agreement course scheduling, enrollment, fiscal, curricular, and teaching functions into the duties of existing staff. School district principals appeared to be the most closely involved with the day-to-day administrative details of joint agreement courses; school district counselors were involved in scheduling joint agreement courses. Only one school (Flora) had a separate vocational director and provided additional time for this function; in the others, the principals served as vocational director although some of the legal functions were performed by the school superintendents.

Facilities

Facilities for the shared programs were provided by the district offering the program as specified in the joint agreement. That district was responsible for maintenance, repair, and supervision of the facilities. Participating districts were charged for direct equipment costs based on the number of students enrolled in the program. In the event of a district withdrawing from participation, there was no provision in the joint agreement for covering the cost to other districts who added equipment to accommodate additional students and planned to recoup those costs over time by charging other districts a per student rate. Janitorial costs were considered part of the "room rent" rather than a separate cost item.

Facilities were provided as follows:

1. The Flora High School provided classroom space for the health programs and office space for the cooperative program. Laboratory facilities were provided by the Clay County Hospital in Flora for the direct patient care health program. Building trades were taught on site in the Flora community.
2. Auto mechanics classroom and laboratory facilities were provided by the North Wayne High School.
3. Graphic arts laboratory facilities were provided by the Clay City High School.
4. The North Clay Community High School provided welding program laboratory facilities.

The age and quality of facilities varied. Some laboratories had inconveniences related to space or equipment, but in general, facilities did not seem to make or break programs.

No new buildings or classrooms were added to accommodate joint agreement courses. No additional space was needed for administration since the joint agreement courses were administered by existing staff. In Flora, the vocational director was provided office space in the school. Very few additional expenditures for facilities were required as a consequence of joint agreement participation since, for most of the schools, participation simply meant opening classes that already occupied a particular space to more students.

Financing and Costs

Per-student costs for joint agreement courses were based on an "actual costs" model, which used costs actually incurred in the delivery of instruction as the basis for assessments.

Costs for a given course were calculated as follows:

1. Calculate for each program:

   a. Per-student costs for teacher salary =

   $$\frac{\text{(teacher salary) (\% time assigned to joint agreement courses)}}{\text{average monthly enrollment in program}}$$

   b. Per-student costs for teacher expenses =

   $$\frac{\text{(total teacher expenses) (\% time assigned to joint agreement course)}}{\text{average monthly enrollment in program}}$$

   c. Per-student costs for equipment =

   $$\frac{\text{(Cost of equipment items}^{1}\text{) (\% time items are used in joint agreement courses)}}{\text{average monthly enrollment in program}}$$

   d. Per-student costs for supplies =

   $$\frac{\text{(cost of supply items) (\% time of use in joint agreement course)}}{\text{average monthly enrollment in program}}$$

   e. Per-student costs for room rental =

   $$\frac{\text{(\$800}^{2}\text{) (Number of hours room is used in joint agreement course)}}{\text{average monthly enrollment in program}}$$

2. Add per-student costs for items a - e to determine total program costs per student.

3. Subtract reimbursement received from the state by a school for each student enrolled in a program from the per-student cost figure obtained in step 2 to yield a "net cost per student."

4. Multiply net cost per student by the number of students enrolled in the program from each school district to get that district's assessment for that program.

Forms used for cost calculation and billing are included in Appendix B.

Administrative costs associated with joint agreement classes were borne by the providing school district. This arrangement was explicitly described in the agreement.

Costs and charges made to other school districts were calculated on a usage rate basis. Financial resources flowed between districts rather than into a central resource pool. Four of the five member districts offered joint agreement programs and received payments from the other districts (the fifth district did not offer a program through the joint agreement). Each district was responsible for preparing and receiving local school board approval for an annual budget for the joint agreement program(s) it offered.

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[1]Cost of new equipment was calculated on a five-year depreciation basis.

[2]An arbitrary figure of $800 was agreed upon by the schools as a per-hour yearly cost for room use. For example, a year length program using a room two hours a day would incur a yearly "room rental" of $1600. A two-hour per day semester length program would have a room rent of $800 ($400 x 2).

This financing method had several implications for individual school districts. Each district with students enrolled benefited financially from the joint agreement because the bill each school sent other schools was 30 percent less than it would have been for the same shared arrangement without the joint agreement (because of the state's 30% higher reimbursement rate for joint agreements over the base vocational reimbursement rate). For example, a district that received $200 per student in state reimbursement for enrolling its own students in a coop program would receive an additional $60 per student by enrolling students from other schools in the program through a joint agreement. The overall result is that the joint agreement allowed additional state funds to flow into the school districts. One school official underscored the importance of this incentive when he indicated that if the state removed the incentives, the joint agreement offerings would change.

Per-student costs for programs varied greatly. Some which involved highcost laboratory equipment cost $650 per student; others requiring less equipment cost $150 per student.

Costs for transporting students to joint agreement classes were reimbursed by the state at 80 percent. Each school district was responsible for claiming its own transportation reimbursement.

Table 33 summarizes each participating school district's cost for joint agreement courses in 1980-81. Expenses incurred by each school were calculated in June and paid in the fall after reimbursement was received from the state.

Table 33. Joint agreement participation expenditures by school district, 1980-81.[1]

School District	Expenditure
Flora	$12,656
North Clay	6,389
North Wayne	3,500
Clay City	933

[1]This information was not reported by West Richland.

Size

Enrollment data for the joint agreement courses were pieced together from reports by each of the schools (Table 34), so there are some discrepancies. The table thus depicts the general scope of the educational services provided rather than an exact account of enrollments.

The average class size for all joint agreement courses excluding coop (coop was excluded because of its special nature that makes it inappropriate to average its enrollment with classroom/laboratory courses) was 17 for the eight-year period. Enrollments in joint agreement courses declined slightly in later years. This trend was attributed to the general decline in student population. The average teacher/student ratio over the eight-year period was approximately 1-to-17.

Enrollment capacity of joint agreement programs varied. Each district had its own policies regarding which grades were allowed to enroll in joint agreement classes.

The joint agreement schools served their own students first. Any remaining space was divided more or less equally among the schools. If a school had more students wanting to enroll than the space allotted, it negotiated with other schools to trade space in one program for space in another. Students generally were able to enroll in courses they wanted. Counselors or the vocational director handled registration and exchanged student slots by telephone.

Table 34. Enrollments in joint agreement courses by school district, 1974-75 to 1981-82.

Year and Courses	Number of Students					
	Flora	North Clay	North Wayne	Clay City	West Richland	Total
1974-75						
Coop	80		9	10		99
Auto	4		19			23
Health	10	5	10			25
1975-76						
Coop	78		7	10		95
Auto	7		13			20
Health	7	3	4	2		16
Building Trades	8		5	3		16
1976-77						
Coop	78		17	10		105
Auto	6		14			20
Health	10	11		1		22
Building Trades	4	3	5	3		15
1977-78						
Coop	75		9			84
Auto	4		12			16
Health	5	8	8	2		23
Building Trades	4	6	6	2		18
1978-79						
Coop	87		16			103
Auto	4		8			12
Health	3	3	2		2	10
Building Trades	20	8	4	6		38
Graphic Arts			2	17		19
1979-80						
Coop	90		15			105
Auto	5		12			17
Health	7	8	2	4		21
Building Trades			4			9
Graphic Arts			3	20		23

Table 34 (continued)

1980-81						
Coop	80		14			84
Auto	5		9			14
Health	2	8	1	4	2	17
Building Trades	18	8	4	8		38
Graphic Arts			2	20		22
1981-82						
Coop	80		5			85
Auto	8		10			18
Health	5	8	2	2	2	19
Building Trades	20	10	11	4		45
Graphic Arts			4	11		15
Advanced Welding	9	8				17

One problem with this procedure (apparently not a serious one) was that pre-enrollments in joint agreement courses tended to be larger than actual enrollments. Sometimes spaces were reserved in the spring for the following year but fall students changed their minds or moved away and the spaces were not filled. This reportedly caused planning difficulties and resulted in excluding some students in other schools who expressed interest in the spring and could have used the spaces but who by fall had made other plans which could not be shifted to accommodate the last minute enrollment opportunity.

Grade level and student records were used to decide which students would be allowed to enroll when demand for a course was greater than available space. Upperclassmen and students with good academic and behavior records were given priority. Principals decided which students would be allowed to enroll. Building trades typically had more demand than could be accommodated.

Staff

The noncenter cooperative arrangement involved no additional non-school district administrative or teaching staff. Rather, existing staff incorporated shared program responsibilities into their current roles.

The Flora vocational director was assigned a specific percentage of time as vocational director for Flora. In this role she was responsible for developing the vocational department budget, supervising the teaching staff and curriculum, arranging transportation for Flora students enrolled in joint agreement courses, preparing reports for state reimbursement, assessing other joint agreement school districts for services provided by the Flora district, preparing one- and five-year plans required by the state for vocational programs, and obtaining grant money for special projects. In each of the other schools, the high school principal served as vocational director.

Each joint agreement course had one teacher with the exception of the cooperative course, which had one full-time and one part-time instructor. Joint agreement teaching staff were faculty in their own schools and were supervised by the administrative staff there. They did not meet as a group. They were hired and paid by their own district.

Curriculum

Curriculum had not changed since the joint agreement was initiated. Joint agreement courses were components of different curricula in the different schools. For example, some schools listed advanced welding in the industrial arts program in their student handbook and others listed it as part of the agriculture curriculum. The addition of joint agreement courses increased the proportion of vocational course offerings to nonvocational offerings in all the schools.

Curriculum offered through the joint agreement schools is shown by location in Table 35. Shared curriculum were building trades, health occupations, graphic arts, advanced welding, auto mechanics, and a cooperative program. North Wayne had started its own related instruction class in 1980-81 and was exploring the possibility of adding its own cooperative program supervisor at the time of the interviews. The primary motivation for this was the feeling that the costs would be lower because of the large number of students selecting this course at Flora though the joint agreement.

Table 35. Joint agreement curriculum by location, 1981-82.

Course	Location
Building Trades	Flora
Health Occupations	Flora
Coop	Flora
Advanced Welding	North Clay
Auto Mechanics & Services	North Wayne
Graphic Arts	Clay City

Some coordination of learning experiences among the shared courses and between the shared courses and nonshared school district curricula occurred. For example, Flora home economics students planned the interior design for the houses constructed in the building trades program each year and the graphic arts program in Clay City prepared the scaled floor plans.

At the time of the interviews, Flora was considering making data processing available through the joint agreement and developing a health certification program in which students could complete patient care requirements during the summer months. It was reported that it made sense to have the health program in Flora and to make it available to students in the other communities since Flora had a hospital and the medical personnel whereas other communities did not. The schools were also discussing the possibilities of sharing a computer course.

There seemed to be some feeling that joint agreement courses would be affected if the state reimbursement structure were changed to allow a school to claim reimbursements for a student in one vocational program only. One school indicated that the joint agreement course would be the first to go if this change occurred. Another administrator said that preservation of the home schools and their programs and serving their own students were priorities in curriculum decisions.

Curriculum initiatives appeared to come primarily from cooperative efforts of the teaching staff and principal within a school district. Principals were as closely involved with joint agreement courses as they were with other courses in their school curriculum.

One school reported that, while no programs had been discontinued in the school since the joint agreement began, enrollment in academic subjects had declined and shifts in enrollment occurred within vocational programs. For example, it was reported that emphasis on consumer-oriented courses in home economics had decreased since the cooperative career education course in home economics was made available.

Scheduling and Courses Offered

School calendars differed slightly among the school districts, but this was generally not a problem in running the joint agreement courses. Each school made adjustments to accommodate the other schools' schedules. For example, if Flora had a school vacation day when other schools did not, students who were enrolled in a Flora course went to a study hall in their home schools during

the hours they would normally be in Flora. If North Wayne had a vacation when Flora did not, North Wayne students who were enrolled in Flora courses were simply excused from class on those days. Discrepancies in the beginning and end of the school year were handled in the same way. This approach resulted in some minor problems in determining student absences in the joint agreement courses and necessitated ongoing communication among the schools about calendars.

Daily schedules also differed, except that all joint agreement classes were offered the first two hours of the day and work experience for the coop program was scheduled the last two hours in the day. For example, North Wayne students started school at 8:30 a.m. and Flora started at 8:21 a.m. To accommodate this time difference and allow time for a bus trip to Flora, North Wayne students had to be at school at 8:00 a.m. North Clay did attempt to mesh its daily schedule with that of Flora. Students who could not arrange early transportation to school were excluded from the joint agreement courses. Including transportation time, joint agreement courses occupied the first three hours of a student's day. One school reported working out students' schedules so that a study hall rather than a class was missed third hour. Another school reported that joint agreement classes occasionally conflicted with courses that were major graduation requirements.

Schedule differences were handled on a case-by-case basis. In some situations time discrepancies were not adjusted--i.e., students always were delivered ten minutes late because of their home school schedule. This was not reported as a major problem. Two schools reported scheduling as the biggest and one of the few problems with the joint agreement courses.

Table 36 shows the scheduling for the joint agreement courses. Most courses met two hours per day. About half of the courses were a semester long and half were a full year. Students who dropped a joint agreement course sometimes had difficulty picking up a course in their own school if the semester or year format of the joint agreement course differed from the format of offerings in their own school.

Table 36. Joint agreement courses and schedule.

	Hours per Day	Semesters	Location
Automotive Services	1	2	North Wayne
Auto Mechanics	2	2	North Wayne
Graphic Arts I	2	1	Clay City
Graphic Arts II	2	1	Clay City
Advanced Welding	2	1	North Clay
Building Trades I	2	2	Flora
Building Trades II	2	2	Flora
Coop	2	2	Flora
Orientation to Health Occupations	1	1	Flora
Direct Patient Care	2	2	Flora
Health Skills	2	1	Flora

Transportation

Bus transportation was provided for students enrolled in joint agreement courses in other schools. The average distance between the joint agreement schools was seven miles (Figure 5). Flora and Clay City were centrally located, making transportation between these two schools and the others less costly than between North Wayne, and North Clay and West Richland. Enrollment patterns reflected these distances: students from North Clay tended to enroll in Flora but not North Wayne programs; North Wayne students tended to enroll in Flora but not North Clay programs and Flora students tended to enroll in North Wayne, North Clay, and Clay City programs. One informant indicated that North Wayne students who wanted advanced welding were more likely to enroll in the course at a nearby community college to avoid the long bus ride. Few West Richland students enrolled in joint agreement courses in the other schools. Distance may have been a factor in this pattern since it was on the edge of the joint agreement geographic area although it should also be noted that it did not offer a joint agreement course and was thus unable to exchange students with other schools.

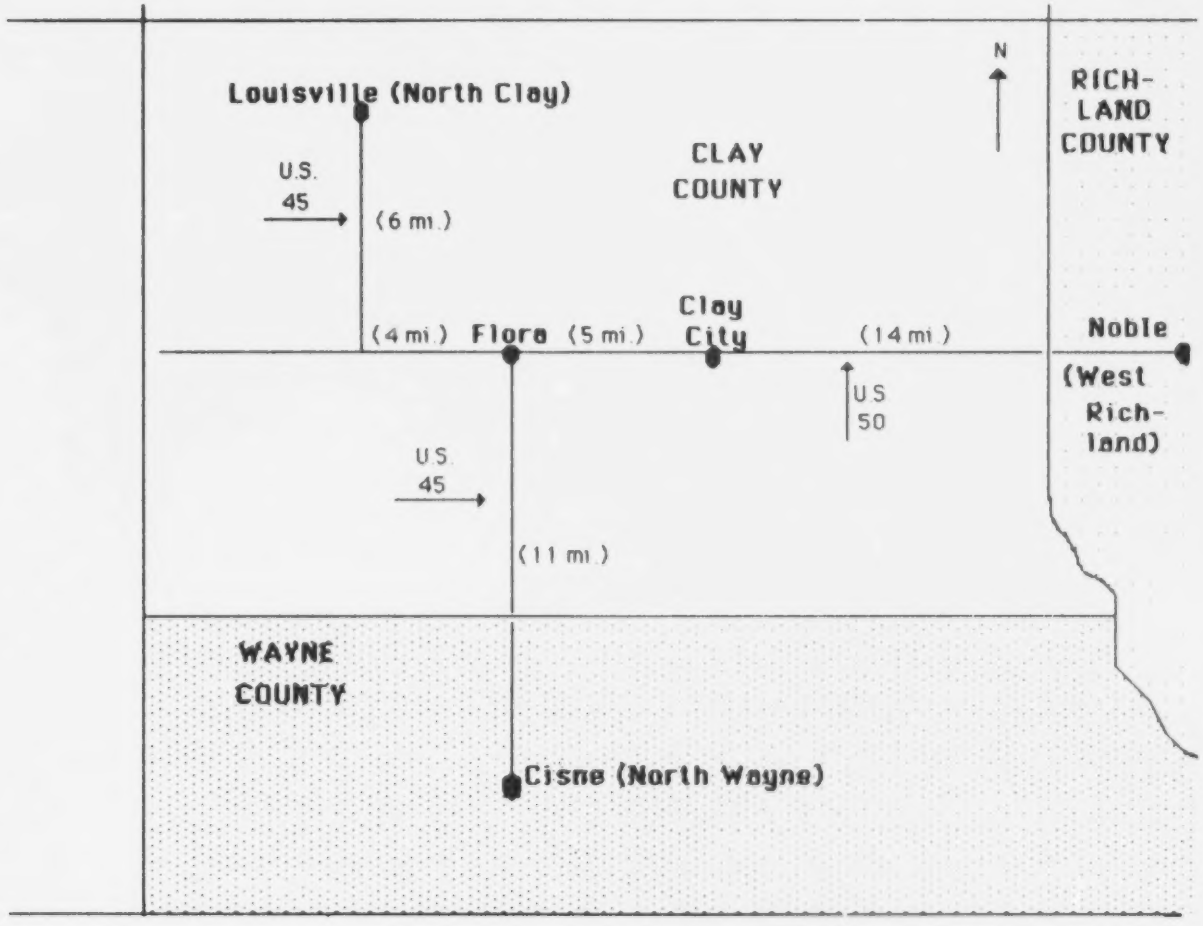

Figure 5. Location of and distances between Joint Agreement schools

Flora, North Wayne, Clay City, and North Clay all used school buses to transport students between the schools. The buses made one round trip each day. Time involved in bus transportation ranged from 15 to 30 minutes. Schools were reimbursed by the state for 80 percent of the cost of transportation. One official indicated that, even with this reimbursement, transportation was expensive for the district.

Students

Joint agreement courses were available to juniors and seniors in member schools. Factors reported to affect student participation in the shared courses were scheduling conflicts and student interests.

Participating schools did not view joint agreement courses as "dumping grounds" or a way to handle difficult students. Instead, it was felt that the courses were attracting a normal population of students. Behavior problems were intentionally controlled by school administrators through careful student selection for joint agreement classes. Some schools indicated that friends often enrolled together so they did not have to go to a neighboring school alone. One school reported decreased interest in academic subjects and increased interest in vocational subjects among students since the joint agreement courses were made available.

A student's home school handled any behavior problems occurring in a joint agreement class. Behavior patterns were no different in the joint agreement courses than in the home school for individual students.

Perceptions of School Personnel and Community Members

Communities were involved in the joint agreement programs in several ways. Job sites for cooperative education students were provided within some of the communities. In the building trades program, community advisory committee members helped with site selection, and it was reported that the community had kept the lot prices for the building trades courses houses stable.

In North Wayne the community was involved in the auto mechanics class in several ways. The class visited local auto body shops; shop owners discussed running a body shop with students; bankers discussed auto loans with the students; the school received free auto parts from a car manufacturer; local citizens donated motors and vehicles needing repair for student projects; another manufacturer had donated a car which was dismantled and reassembled each year.

A resident of one of the communities and member of an advisory committee identified contributions to the community and surrounding area as meeting needs for auto mechanics and welders, helping farmers to remain stable and independent, and providing a generally skilled work force that had positive attitudes toward work. This individual indicated that the community liked to hire local students and that the cooperative program was seen as facilitating this practice.

The joint agreement courses were perceived by school officials and community representatives as being considerably more positive than the next best alternative of not providing the courses at all or having a single school district provide them. School officials generally felt that they could not offer all of the courses on their own. Officials from one school saw the health occupations program at Flora as the "glue" that kept schools involved in the joint agreement and referred to Flora as the "hub" of the joint agreement.

Key factors in the development of the joint agreement identified by one school official were the leadership exerted by the Flora vocational director and the cooperation of principals, school boards, and superintendents, who viewed the agreement as a means of providing opportunities for students who might otherwise have dropped out of school.

Perceived consequences of offering the joint agreement courses included: manpower needs of the area better served; a closer relationship and more frequent communication among participating schools; increased enrollment in courses that were prerequisites for joint agreement courses; and a trend toward a more vocational orientation in the schools. The schools and communities were described by officials as vocationally rather than academically oriented. One informant perceived the school board in his community as supporting vocational education more and spending more on vocational education than academic subjects.

Curriculum without the joint agreement courses was seen as limited in the smaller schools. Perceived advantages of joint agreement courses were: preparing students for the world of work, helping them make realistic career choices, teaching them responsibility, and teaching them skills they would need in the future.

Perceived advantages to the offering school were fuller and consequently more efficiently run classes, additional financial assistance from the state and the other schools, and an expanded curriculum at a relatively low cost.

Two disadvantages connected with joint agreement courses were cited as keeping track of attendance and occasional truancy. If students did not show up in a joint agreement class, it was necessary to call their school to learn if they were absent that day. A third problem was discrepancies in school policies on student absences. For example, one school allowed students excused absences to work at home on the farm if they made up their school work. If students from a school which followed this policy were enrolled in a joint agreement course at a school which did not excuse such absences, it was unclear which school's policy should apply.

Time and transportation were also concerns. Students were sometimes late to a joint agreement class because they missed the bus or the bus was late, and they lost a class period for transportation time. Distance and cost were mentioned as other transportation problems.

Student supervision was an infrequent problem. In one instance a student had gone to the pool hall instead of to his joint agreement class. School officials indicated that student behavior problems had not increased in number but had simply relocated.

Calendar and curricular articulation among the schools were cited as concerns rather than problems, although two counselors saw scheduling problems as the biggest and one of the few problems with the joint agreement courses.

Disadvantages to schools operating joint agreement courses included some inconveniences and loss of flexibility in scheduling.

Boards of the schools involved in the joint agreement courses were reported to feel very positively about the cooperative arrangement. One citizen stated that he had no complaints and felt the joint agreement was a real bargain for the schools. A vocational teacher in one of the schools reported that the joint agreement courses had helped his program because students enrolled in the joint agreement courses shared experiences in classroom discussions which enhanced learning for students not enrolled in joint agreement courses. This teacher did not perceive that joint agreement courses had drawn students away from the district's program.

Summary

The Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement began in 1974 and provided the participating schools an opportunity to expand their vocational course offerings at moderate cost and with considerable efficiency. The agreement required a willingness to cooperate and share on the part of school administrators, boards of education, counselors and teaching staff. The leadership of the Flora vocational director-home economics teacher, and the encouragement by the state for schools to provide increased vocational offerings were major factors in the development of the joint agreement.

The governance and management of the agreement was relatively informal. Each participating school managed the course(s) it offered and simply billed the other participating schools for expenses. The cost per student included teacher salary and expenses, equipment, supplies and room rental prorated in relation to the number of students after subtracting state reimbursement. Participating schools billed each other once a year. Other governance issues were handled by an administrative advisory committee which initially met once a year in February to work out plans and details for courses and payments. Ultimate authority for any course lay with the school district offering the program.

Facilities were provided by the school offering each course. No new facilities were constructed.

Enrollment in courses was determined by the host school, which accommodated its own students first. If space was available, principals in the other participating schools were told approximately

how many students they could enroll in the course. Most enrollment, scheduling, and program operation problems were handled by phone. Building trades was the only course with more demand than enrollment space.

Existing teaching and administrative staff were used for every course offered. The teaching staff was likely to be efficiently used because joint agreement courses were more likely than others to be filled to capacity. Joint agreement programs offered were building trades, health occupations, advanced welding, auto mechanics, graphic arts and a work experience coop program in several vocational areas including home economics.

Most schools had similar daily schedules but different yearly schedules. Consequently, adjustments had to be made for varying vacation and break days. Most joint agreement courses were two hours long and were scheduled the first two periods of the day. Some students had to get to their home schools early to catch a bus to the school where the course was being offered.

Students enrolled in the courses were reported to represent the normal population of students in the home school. Communities appeared to support joint agreement.

CHAPTER V

HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS

A brief summary of the home economics programs in each of the joint agreement districts is presented in this section so that their relationship to the joint agreement offerings can be seen.

All five school districts offered a consumer homemaking program; Flora and North Clay also offered occupational home economics. The only joint agreement home economics offering was the coop home economics program at Flora.

Size

Flora employed three full-time home economics teachers and North Wayne, North Clay, Clay City, and West Richland each employed one full-time teacher. Course enrollments for the 1981-82 academic year are reported in Table 37.

Flora offered thirteen occupational and consumer-oriented home economics courses, including three yearlong courses and ten semester courses. Its first occupational home economics offering was a food service program in 1965. Several occupational offerings had been since added. The child care program included an unpaid field experience.

North Clay's home economics program offered two occupational courses, Sewing for Profit and Advanced Foods. The other seven courses were consumer-oriented.

North Wayne's program was mostly consumer-focused but future plans included more emphasis on occupational offerings. Advanced Foods, Advanced Clothing, Environmental Living, Child Care, and Parenting had been recently added and Advanced Foods and Advanced Clothing were to be deleted in 1982-83.

Maximum enrollment capacity was 25 for North Wayne, 20 for Flora's foods and clothing courses, and 30 for Flora's personal and fashion courses. Minimum enrollment requirements were 10 in Flora and 5 in North Wayne. The other schools did not report minimum or maximum enrollments.

Facilities and Equipment

Home economics facilities in all five districts were located in the school buildings. Flora and North Clay had separate classroom, laboratory, and office space; North Wayne and Clay City departments did not. In Flora, new home economics facilities were being constructed. The North Wayne, Clay City, and North Clay teachers indicated that the home economics facilities were old but adequate. In each school, future plans focused on replacing worn and obsolete equipment. One school official indicated that more advanced equipment was needed as well.

Facilities at Flora were shared with Illinois Eastern Community College at Fairfield. North Wayne, North Clay, Clay City, and West Richland facilities were not shared with other groups.

Finances

Each district financed its own programs. Costs for 1980-81 and 1981-82 are shown in Table 38. Flora spent approximately $68,000, and the other four schools spent from approximately $15,000 to $23,000 for home economics programs. Salaries dominated the budget in every school. Amounts spent on supplies, equipment, and facilities varied greatly, with Flora spending approximately twice as much on supplies as the other schools.

Table 37. Number of students enrolled in home economics courses offered in joint agreement school districts, 1981-82.

School District	Course Title	Course Length	Enrollment		
			M	F	Total
Flora	Cooperative Child Care Occupations	Full Year		15	15
	Orientation to Child Care	Semester		20	20
	Personal and Occupational Orientation	Semester		30	30
	Cooperative Career Education	Full Year	20	40	60
	Advanced Fashion and Retailing	Semester		10	10
	Orientation to the World of Fashion Retailing and Child Care	Semester		18	18
	Advanced Foods	Semester	10	32	42
	Orientation to Foods	Semester	11	30	41
	Consumer Management	Semester		24	24
	Parenting	Semester		24	24
	Adult Living	Semester	2	18	20
	Everyday Living Environment	Full Year	6	8	14
	Orientation to Child Development	Semester		12	12
			49	281	330
North Clay	Sewing for Profit	Full Year		4	4
	Advanced Foods	Full Year		10	10
	Consumer Home Management	Semester		5	5
	Living Environments and Interior Design	Semester		5	5
	Adult Living	Semester		11	11
	Parenting and Child Development	Semester		11	11
	Home Economics Orientation	Semester		17	17
	Food Production and Service	Semester		22	22
	Clothing Production and Service	Semester		22	22
				69	69
North Wayne	Introduction to Home Economics	Full Year		22	22
	Introduction to Foods	Semester		8	8
	Introduction to Cothing	Semester		--	--**
	Advanced Foods	Semester		17	17
	Advanced Clothing	Semester		--	--**
	Adult Living	Semester		15	15
	Environmental Living	Semester		--	--**
	Coop	Full Year		7	7
	Child Care	Semester		7	7
	Parenting	Semester		--	--**
				76	76

**New courses; no enrollment figures available.

Table 37. (continued).

School District	Course Title	Course Length	Enrollment M	Enrollment F	Enrollment Total
Clay City*	Clothing and Fabric Care	Semester			
	Basic Clothing Construction	Semester			
	Advanced Clothing Construction	Semester			
	Foods Orientation	Semester			
	Basic Food Production	Semester			
	Advanced Food Production	Semester			
	Introduction to Child Care	Semester			
	Health and Nutrition for Children	Semester			
	The Developing Child	Semester			
	Child Care Careers	Semester			
	Children and The Family	Semester			
	Family Life	Semester			
	Home Management	Semester			
					79*
West Richland***	Introduction to Home Economics	Full Year			
	Clothing I	Semester			
	Foods I	Semester			
	Child Care	Semester			
	Living Environments	Semester			
	Singles Living	Semester			
	Family Living	Full Year			

*Only total enrollment was available.

***No enrollment figures were reported.

Management

In the single-teacher departments, the teacher ordered supplies, developed curriculum, and taught courses, and communicated directly with administration. In Flora, a part-time department head assumed responsibility for fiscal matters, reports, and leadership in curriculum development.

Staff

In Flora one of the three home economics teachers was interviewed. She taught vocational home economics. One-third of her time was devoted to teaching Flora's child care occupations course and two-thirds to the cooperative education course offered through the joint agreement. She had 19 years of teaching experience, 7 in her current position. In addition, she had 5 years of non-teaching occupational experience. She held a nine-month contract with fifteen additional days of extended employment. Her teaching schedule included one section of a coop class, two sections of child care occupations, and three hours of supervising coop students. She was also the advisor for the Flora Chapter of Future Homemakers of America (FHA). She attended faculty meetings at Flora regularly and at North Wayne occasionally since she supervised several North Wayne students enrolled in the coop program and was helping North Wayne establish its own coop program. She reported communicating most frequently with community people, followed by other home economics teachers in her department at Flora, followed by the home economics teacher and principal at North Wayne. Her office at North Wayne was located next to the principal's office, facilitating communication. Among community members she communicated most frequently with members of the business community followed by program advisory committee members and parents of students.

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Table 38. Home economics program costs in joint agreement school districts.

District and Item	1980-81	1981-82
Flora		
Salaries	$61,517.68	$60,978.74
Supplies	4,544.80	4,365.00
Equipment	2,540.00	1,750.00
Total	$68,603.31	$67,093.74
North Clay		
Salaries	$16,765.59	$18,442.15
Supplies	1,182.13	1,300.34
Equipment	600.00	700.00
Facilities	1,908.60	2,098.60
Total	$20,456.32	$22,541.09
North Wayne		
Salaries	$14,819.50	$15,840.50
Supplies	427.77	1,000.00
Total	$15,247.27	$16,840.52
West Richland		
Salaries	$12,626.00	$14,150.00
Supplies	1,800.00	1,800.00
Equipment	400.00	200.00
Total	$14,826.00	$16,150.00
Clay City		
Salaries	$15,290.77	$16,800.00
Supplies	2,417.60	2,500.00
Total	$17,708.37	$23,105.97

The North Wayne home economics teacher reported that all of her time was devoted to that district. She reported spending 86 percent of her time teaching vocational consumer homemaking courses and 14 percent teaching an occupational coop-related class. She had had 14 years of experience, 13 in her current position. In addition, she had 8 years of nonteaching occupational experience. She was employed full time on a nine-month contract with no extended employment. She reported that 90 percent of her time was spent in vocational activities. She also advised the North Wayne FHA chapter and had taught adult education courses in the past for one of the community colleges. Her teaching schedule included one preparation period, one study hall, two sections of Orientation to Home Economics, one coop-related class, one section of Child Care, and one of Adult Living. She reported communicating most frequently with administrators, followed by other teachers and community people. Among teachers, those most frequently communicated with were those nearest her in the building followed by the Future Farmers of America advisor and home economics teachers in other schools. She reported communicating most frequently with administrators in her own school followed by those responsible for joint agreement courses. Regarding community members, communication was most frequent with program advisory committee members followed by parents and members of the community at large.

The home economics teacher at North Clay reported spending one-sixth of her time in consumer homemaking and five-sixths in occupational home economics. She taught all the home economics classes offered at North Clay, was the FHA-Home Economics and Related Training (HERO) advisor, and supervised a homeroom. She had more than 19 years of teaching experience, 10 in her current position. She also had 8 years of nonteaching work experience. She was employed full time for nine months and taught only vocational courses. She taught six courses, three full-year and six semester long. She reported communicating with other vocational teachers most frequently, followed by her principal, parents of students, advisory committee members, and community citizens.

The home economics teacher at Clay City devoted all of her teaching time to home economics courses. She was employed on a full-time nine-month basis and taught a consumer homemaking program that offered students 13 semester-length courses. She also had a coop placement program with a local restaurant and served as the FHA-HERO chapter advisor. She utilized a citizens advisory committee, which met four times a year. The FHA chapter was very active and conducted a number of events such as a walkathon, spring tea style show, quilt displays, and knitting displays.

The home economics teacher in West Richland was employed full-time on a nine month basis. She served as the FHA advisor and had eight years of teaching experience.

Materials

In general, teachers reported they had adequate teaching materials and their goal was to continually update those aids. Materials were not shared with other teachers. Most teachers planned to purchase additional teaching materials. New texts had been purchased in some schools. Some teachers reported receiving materials from the local county cooperative extension agent.

Scheduling and Program Planning

Home economics was not a required course in any of the schools. Courses were sequenced from exploration-orientation to advanced concept and skill development. Courses were either full-year or semester long and some were prerequisites to joint agreement courses.

Teachers indicated a variety of factors influenced what they taught. For the Flora teacher interviewed, the greatest influences were state curriculum guides; school or district curriculum guides; and students' future plans, supervised occupational experience programs, and needs. Moderate influences were suggestions from parents; textbook content and reference materials; types of business and industry in the community; instructor interest; advisory committees; and community values, norms, and conditions. Facilities and equipment, student contests, and standardized tests had little influence on her curricular decisions. The vocational advisory council met four times per year and included parents, other vocational teachers, non-vocational teachers, school administrators, extension personnel, farmers, homemakers, business and industry representatives, students, and a school board member.

The North Wayne teacher indicated that the greatest influences on her teaching were suggestions from parents; state and school district curriculum guides; students' future plans; types of businesses and industry in the community; advisory committee; community values, norms, and conditions; and students' supervised occupational experience programs. Of moderate influence were textbook content and reference materials, instructor knowledge of subject matter, administrative decree, facilities and equipment, student contests, and student needs. Instructor interest and standardized tests had less influence. A unit district advisory committee which met once per year provided input to the program. This committee was concerned with all vocational areas and included parents, other vocational teachers, school administrators, farmers, homemakers, business and industry representatives, and students. One school official indicated that future plans for home economics placed more emphasis on occupational programs.

The North Clay teacher reported that state and district curriculum guides, students' future plans, industry in the community, administrative decree, contests for students, standardized tests, community values and norms, student needs, and student ability levels had much influence on her choice of subject matter. An advisory committee met four times a year to assist in program planning. Future program plans included adding two textile courses. The teacher felt that equipment was adequate but facilities should be modernized and storage space added.

Specific information on scheduling and curricular influences for home economics programs were not provided by Clay City and West Richland schools.

Students

Most students enrolled in the home economics programs were female. Only Flora reported enrolling males; they comprised approximately 15 percent of the 1981-82 home economics enrollment there.

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Students who participated in the cooperative education program in Flora were those who (1) needed financial assistance to stay in school, (2) could not get experience in another manner, and (3) were potential dropouts. Flora home economics students were reported to be engaged in the following activities one year after graduation: post-secondary education (45%), full-time employment (35%), armed services (1%), and married (14%). Seventy-three special needs students were enrolled in home economics classes. The teacher estimated that most students came from middle class families with about one-fifth coming from lower and one-fifth coming from upper socioeconomic groups. About half of the home economics students lived in the country and half in town. Families of about a third of the students were engaged in farming. Home economics students were reported to come mainly from the middle (60%) and lower (35%) academic performance groups. Male students tended to enroll in the coop and foods courses. Sixty percent of the home economics students were FHA members. Of the students to whom home economics courses were available, 23 percent enrolled.

The North Wayne home economics teacher reported that students registered in her program to pursue interests, prepare for the future, and develop skills. Students reportedly used what they learned in class in their homes, in current jobs, and in career planning. Students also reportedly shared what they learned in home economics with their parents. The year following graduation students enrolled in home economics were reported as being in post-secondary education (5%), in full-time employment (78%), in the armed services (2%), and married (10%). Several had usually become parents. Students were from middle to lower socioeconomic backgrounds. About 85 percent of the students came from farm families. It was also reported that 88 percent of the home economics students were not college bound. Most came from the middle and lower academic performance groups. Students tended to enroll repeatedly in home economics. Of the students enrolled in home economics courses, 80 percent were FHA members. Two special needs students were enrolled in home economics courses. Two students had dropped out of home economics courses the previous year but not out of school. It was reported that 61 percent of the students to whom the courses were available enrolled.

The North Clay teacher estimated that 5 percent of her graduates went on to post-secondary education, 65 percent took full-time employment, 2 percent entered military service, 50 percent married, and 35 percent became parents within a year after graduation. She also estimated that 75 percent of her students would be classified as lower class, 20 percent as middle class, and 5 percent as upper socioeconomic class. She reported 40 percent of her students lived in town and 60 percent lived in the country. She estimated that 90 percent of her students were not college bound.

The Clay City teacher reported that the nearby cities of Olney and Effingham attracted more graduates than did Chicago or St. Louis. A sizable percentage of home economics students from this district was reported to stay in the local community.

Specific information on West Richland students was not made available to the researchers.

Perceptions of School and Community Members

Home economics was a well-established program in Flora. As one school official put it, "Home economics and agriculture are old programs here."

Primary benefits students received from home economics courses were seen as the acquisition of basic and employment skills and exploration of occupational interests. The range of perceptions was wide; some saw home economics as helping students of both sexes manage their daily lives and pursue occupational interests; others saw it as a course primarily for females who learn, as one school official put it, "skills a housewife better have." The counselor in this official's school indicated that high ability students were not encouraged to take home economics and that students seemed to prefer "cooking courses." In this particular school, school officials and the counselor all talked in terms of home economics as a girl's subject.

Changes or improvements informants would like to see included closer relationships between basic skills and skills taught in home economics (the computer was mentioned specifically) and better representation of needed day-to-day skills in the curriculum. One development that was described positively by a school official was a summer paid elderly health aide program. Home economics was a prerequisite course for this program.

There was a range of perceptions regarding how actively school boards sought ways to bring home economics programs to students. In general, school boards were perceived as viewing existing programs positively and as willing to work to retain programs.

Community support for the home economics program was expressed in the willingness of the community members to supply work stations for the coop education programs and serve on advisory committees, and the level of parental involvement in programs. One teacher noted that community needs generated program directions.

Administrative support for home economics programs was described in terms of budgetary support, providing administrative time to the home economics teacher for departmental and vocational program-related duties, involving home economics teachers in decisions, and providing teachers with autonomy.

Other teachers were reported to be supportive by excusing students from their classes when they were engaged in special home economics projects.

One school official noted the importance of home economics in preparing for adulthood, particularly for students who would not be likely to pursue post-secondary education.

Summary

Flora had three home economics teachers and the other joint agreement schools each had one. All teachers had several years of teaching experience; some had other occupational experience as well. Flora and North Clay had occupational home economics courses, while the other schools emphasized consumer homemaking courses.

All of the facilities were housed in the high school buildings. Some teachers felt their facilities needed modernizing. All facilities were reasonably well-equipped. There were no plans to expand or construct new facilities in any of the schools with the exception of Flora which was rebuilding after a fire.

The cost of home economics programs ranged from $68,000 in Flora to $15,000-$23,000 in the other schools. Teachers functioned as department heads, ordered teaching supplies, managed facilities and programs, and taught classes.

Most courses were offered on a semester basis. A few courses were taught for the full year but these tended to be the orientation or introductory course for ninth grade students. Courses were available to students in grades nine through twelve.

Most students who enrolled in home economics courses terminated their education after high school. Teachers indicated that from five to forty-five percent were employed full-time, ten to fifty percent married, and many became parents one year after high school. Some teachers felt more than fifty percent of their students would be classified in a lower socioeconomic group.

Strong support was reported for the home economics programs from the community and school administration.

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CHAPTER VI

VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

All five school districts offered vocational agriculture programs. Only North Clay shared a course (advanced welding) with students in other schools. Flora tended to be the only school that sent students to this course; 11 Flora students were enrolled fall semester and none in the spring semester.

Size

Enrollments for vocational agriculture programs in the five school districts are presented in Table 39. Two full-time teachers were employed at North Clay. The other districts each employed one full-time agriculture teacher whose primary role was to direct and carry out the high school program. An exception was Flora, where an adult welding class was taught. Total high school enrollment in agriculture in Flora was 197 students. At North Clay, enrollment in agriculture was 236 with 148 students enrolled in regular agriculture courses, 76 enrolled in a supervised occupational experience course and 12 enrolled in a cooperative education course. North Wayne and West Richland had 91 students enrolled in vocational agriculture. Clay City had 83 students in its program. Minimum enrollments required in courses were 10 in Flora and 5 in North Wayne. The other schools did not indicate a minimum.

Facilities and Equipment

Agriculture classroom, office, and laboratory facilities are described in Table 40. All the schools had facilities in the high school buildings. Flora and Clay City also had land laboratories.

Facilities for agriculture programs were viewed as having some inadequacies. In Flora, the near-new facilities were not shared with other groups but were described as crowded. In North Wayne, the agriculture shop was shared with the automotive courses, a situation described as a problem by both the agriculture teacher and a school official. A community college also shared the shop and equipment costs. Lighting was described as inadequate in welding areas. Future plans included increasing the welding area and the number of welders, having an unshared shop, and replacing worn and obsolete equipment.

West Richland planned to maintain its existing facilities. Clay City respondents felt a need for additional storage space and planned to maintain and update the present facilities. North Clay wanted to add welders and maintain what was described as an excellent facility.

Finances

Agriculture programs were financed by the school districts that offered them. The North Clay joint agreement welding course was also funded by participating school districts. Program costs are summarized in Table 41. Costs in 1981-82 for single teacher departments ranged from approximately $15,500 to $25,000. Costs for the two teacher department were approximately $42,000.

Management

Agriculture departments were managed by the teachers. Teachers communicated directly with school administration, ordered supplies, managed equipment and facilities, developed curriculum, and maintained student records.

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Table 39. Enrollment in agriculture courses offered in joint agreement school districts, 1981-82.

School District	Course Title	Enrollment		
		M	F	Total
Flora	Orientation to Agriculture Occupations (Plant & Animal Science)	24	4	28
	Orientation to Agriculture Occupations (Basic Agricultural Mechanics)	25	3	28
	Soil Management	14	0	14
	Agricultural Mechanics Skills	16	0	16
	Welding	31	1	32
	Small Engine Repair	34	1	35
	Agriculture Power and Mechanics	20	0	20
	Agricultural Production	NA	NA	NA*
	Farm Business Management	24	0	24
		188	9	197
North Clay	Introduction to Agriculture	31	1	32
	Advanced Welding	11	--	11
	Agricultural Electricity	8	--	8
	Plant Science	8	--	8
	Special Problems	2	--	2
	Animal Science	15	1	16
	Conservation	10	3	13
	Horticulture	10	3	13
	Supervised Occupational Experience	74	2	76
	Small Engines	15	--	15
	Beginning Welding	15	--	15
	Agricultural Power and Farm Management	10	--	10
	Auto Mechanics	5	--	5
	Cooperative Education	12	--	12
		226	10	236
North Wayne	Agriculture Orientation	10	--	10
	Soils, Crops & Fertilizer	6	--	6
	Small Engines	6	--	6
	Animal Science	14	--	14
	Shop Skills	14	--	14
	Agribusiness Management	8	--	8
	Farm Power	8	--	8
	Welding	10	--	10
	Electricity	15	--	15
		91	0	91
West Richland	Orientation to Agricultural Occupations	14	0	14
	Ag II Plant and Animal Science	16	0	16
	Ag III Agriculture Business Management	8	0	8
	Ag III Agricultural Mechanics and Skills	4	3	7
	Ag IV Farm Business Management	4	3	7
	Ag IV Farm Mechanics Maintenance	8	0	8
	Small Engines	14	2	16
	Welding	13	2	15
		81	10	91

*Enrollment data was not available.

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Table 39. (continued).

School District	Course Title	Enrollment		
		M	F	Total
Clay City	Introduction to Agriculture	21	1	22
	Agricultural Science	12	--	12
	Agriculture Skills	11	--	11
	Agribusiness Management	11	--	11
	Welding I	10	--	10
	Power Mechanics	17	--	17
		82	1	83

Table 40. Size of classroom, office, laboratory facilities, and land laboratories for agriculture programs in joint agreement school districts.

School District	Classroom (ft^2)	Office (ft^2)	Laboratory/ Shop (ft^2)	Land Laboratory (acres)
Flora	576	120	2100 (est.)	5
North Clay	768	120	2560	--
North Wayne	750	200	--	--
Clay City	600	120	3200	12
West Richland	400	100	4000	--

Staff

One teacher taught one three-hour class per week at a community college and another taught 90 hours per year. One of the North Clay teachers taught a joint agreement course.

The Flora teacher had 18 years of teaching experience, 15 at Flora. He had two years of non-teaching work experience. He was employed full-time for nine months with 20 days of extended employment. He taught two sections of Orientation to Agriculture, and one section each of Basic Agricultural Mechanics, Small Gas Engines, Farm Business Management, Agricultural Mechanics Skills, and had one preparation period. He taught 197 students in grades 9-12, and he was also the Future Farmers of America (FFA) advisor. He taught one adult education course per quarter through a community college. He reported that he communicated most frequently with other teachers, followed by Flora school administrators and community people. Among teachers, he most frequently interacted with those nearest him in the building and with those teaching joint agreement courses. Communication with community members was most frequent with parents of his students followed by advisory committee members and others.

The North Wayne teacher had 11 years of experience, 6 in his current position. He was employed full-time for 11 months and devoted all of that time to vocational agriculture. His schedule included one section each of Agriculture Orientation, Soils, Shop Welding, Shop Skills, and Agribusiness; one preparation period; and one study hall. He was also the FFA advisor. He reported communicating most frequently with administrators followed by community people and other teachers. Other teachers he communicated with most frequently were the industrial arts teacher, with whom he

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Table 41. Agriculture program costs, joint agreement districts.

District and Items	1980-81	1981-82
Flora		
Salaries	$19,656.54	$22,277.85
Supplies	2,529.23	2,110.00
Total	$22,185.77	$24,387.85
Clay City		
Salaries	$18,346.89	$22,000.00
Supplies	3,231.00	3,000.00
Equipment	1,932.00	--
Total	$23,509.89	$25,000.00
North Wayne		
Salaries	$16,935.72	$18,138.62
Supplies	857.27	1,000.00
Total	$17,792.99	$19,138.62
North Clay		
Salaries	$31,055.82	$34,160.00
Supplies	2,711.88	2,982.00
Equipment	600.00	1,000.00
Facilities	3,817.00	4,198.00
Total	$38,629.00	$42,340.00
West Richland		
Salaries	$12,229.00	$13,115.00
Supplies	2,100.00	2,100.00
Equipment	350.00	550.00
Total	$14,697.00	$15,765.00

shared a shop, followed by those nearest him in the building and agriculture teachers in other schools. Regarding administrators, his most frequent communication was with the principal in his own school, followed by the district superintendent. Community sectors most frequently communicated with were parents of students enrolled in agriculture followed by members of the program advisory committee and other community members.

The West Richland teacher was employed full-time on a 10-month contract. He devoted all of his time to vocational agriculture. He offered five courses per quarter and had 91 students. He also served as FFA advisor. He had one year of teaching experience.

At Clay City, the vocational agriculture teacher was employed full time on a 12-month contract. He devoted all of his time to the agriculture program. He had seven years of teaching experience. He offered four full-year and two semester courses and was the FFA advisor.

At North Clay the two teachers each had 10 years experience (6 and 7 years in their current positions). Both teachers were employed full time on nine-month contracts. One teacher had a 250-hour extended contract for the summer, served as the FFA advisor, and taught the advanced welding course in the joint agreement program. The other teacher served as head basketball coach in addition to teaching agriculture.

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Materials

All teachers indicated that teaching materials in the agriculture programs were not shared and were adequate. Future plans included purchase of additional materials, particularly audiovisuals, to keep programs current. All teachers purchased vocational agriculture service units from the University of Illinois for use in their programs.

Scheduling and Program Planning

Agriculture courses were not required in any of the schools. In all the schools the vocational agriculture courses were sequenced. Generally courses were either semester or year-long. North Wayne required students enrolling in agriculture to make a full-year commitment. Most schools had a combination of full-year and semester courses.

The Flora teacher indicated that the greatest influences on curricular decisions were state and school district curriculum guides, students' future plans for education and work, instructor interest, instructor knowledge of subject matter, and facilities and equipment available. Moderate influences were textbook content and reference material; type of industry and business in the community; administrative decree; student contests; community values, norms and conditions; students' occupational experience programs; and student needs. Little influence was reported from suggestions from parents of students, advisory committees, and standardized tests. An agriculture advisory committee composed of parents, other vocational teachers, school administrators, extension personnel, farmers, homemakers, business and industry, and students met more than four times a year. Future plans included the possibility of changing from semester to full-year courses, a change which the state was reportedly encouraging, and adding a teacher in mechanics.

The North Wayne teacher reported that predominant influences on his curricular decisions were students' future plans for education and work, type of industry and business in the community, advisory committee input, community values and norms, and student needs. Moderate influences were reported as suggestions from parents of students enrolled in agriculture programs, state and school district curriculum guides, textbook content and reference materials, instructor interest, instructor knowledge of subject matter, administrative decree, facilities and equipment available, contests students would enter, and students' occupational experience programs. Standardized tests reportedly had little influence. A program advisory committee met once per year and included parents and farmers.

The West Richland teacher indicated that state curriculum guides and the type of business in the community had much influence on what subject matter he taught. Student needs, students' occupational experience program, community values and norms, standardized tests, contests, facilities and equipment available, administrative decree, instructor knowledge, textbook content, students' future plans, and parental suggestions had some influence on what was taught.

The Clay City teacher indicated that student needs, students' supervised occupational experience programs, community values and norms, advisory committees, facilities and equipment, instructor knowledge, instructor interest, district and state curriculum guides had much influence on the subject matter taught. Suggestions from parents, students' future work plans, textbook materials, and contests had some influence. The teacher met with an advisory committee four times a year.

The North Clay teachers had somewhat differing perspectives as to factors that influenced program planning. One teacher reported that textbook content, type of businesses in the community, and students' future plans had much influence on what he taught. The other teacher reported that student needs, students' supervised occupational experience programs, students' future plans, parental suggestions, contests, instructor knowledge and interest, and type of business had much influence on what he taught.

Students

Flora agriculture students for whom information was provided were reported to be in the following situations one year after graduation: post-secondary education (20 percent); full-time employment, largely in mechanics and production agriculture jobs (30 percent); armed services (5 percent); married (5 percent); parent (2 percent); farming (30 percent). Half of the students'

families were engaged in farming and 70 percent of the students lived in rural areas. Eighty percent of the agriculture students were reported to not be college bound. The 20 percent that did go to college tended to study agriculture. About half were reported to be average on academic performance, 40 percent low, and 5 percent high. Seventy-five percent of currently enrolled students were reported to have been previously enrolled in agriculture courses. Half of the students were FFA members. Sixty-three special needs students were reported enrolled in vocational agriculture. The teacher indicated that nearly every student who might be interested in vocational agriculture was enrolled in a course.

The activities reported for North Wayne agriculture students one year following graduation included about 10 percent pursuing post-secondary education (about half in agriculture), and about 30 percent in full-time employment including agriculture- and oil-related jobs. Ten percent were farming. Generally, about 95 percent of the agriculture students lived in the country and almost all of these were from families engaged in farming. About half of the students were reported to be average, forty percent low and five percent high academic performers. Ninety-eight percent were FFA members. Ninety percent of the students currently enrolled in courses had previously taken agriculture courses, and most agriculture students took agriculture all four years of high school. Twelve special needs students were reported enrolled in the program. Students were described as tending to have short-term rather than long-term goals and to be concerned with "getting by."

About 45 percent of the students at North Clay were from town, and 55 percent were from farms. The teachers reported about 30 percent were bound for college, and about 70 percent were aiming for employment following high school. About 10 percent of the students were in the upper, 70 percent in the middle, and 20 percent in the lower academic performance ranks. About 30 percent were FFA members. About 90 percent had previously taken vocational agriculture courses. It was estimated that one year following graduation from high school more than 10 percent of the students would be farming.

The Clay City teacher reported that 15 percent of the students were from the town of Clay City and 85 percent lived in the country; 60 percent came from farm families; 50 percent pursued post-secondary schooling and 50 percent sought full-time employment; 15 percent were likely to farm sometime in the future; and 10 percent married within one year of graduation. He indicated that his students came equally from low, middle, and high academic performance ranks. About 95 percent belonged to the FFA chapter.

The West Richland teacher reported that 30 percent of his students lived in town and 70 percent lived in the country; 65 percent came from farm families; 30 percent pursued further education, 15 percent took full-time employment, 40 percent farmed, and 5 percent married and became parents within one year following high school. Most were reported to come from the middle socioeconomic levels. About 50 percent of the agriculture students were average, 25 percent were high, and 25 percent were low academic performers. About 90 percent were FFA members.

Perceptions of School and Community Members

In every school the community was involved in the vocational agriculture programs through advisory council membership, FFA contest advising, and providing of training sites for students. On-farm instructional visits by agriculture teachers and community-based coop work experience provided opportunities for citizens to understand the agriculture program. The Clay County Pork Producers gave a $25 bond award to students at the FFA banquet.

One informant indicated that agriculture programs were not much different since the joint agreement had been implemented. Another agriculture teacher attributed this situation to subsuming of the joint agreement auto mechanics class by one of the agriculture programs. This had avoided a tradeoff between agriculture and auto mechanics. Other teachers indicated there was no real interest, pressure, or felt need to share agriculture programs.

The main benefits to students taking agriculture were described by school counselors, administrators, and community members as exposure to and exploration of many aspects of agriculture, and preparation for after graduation. With the entire area involved in agriculture, a vocational agriculture program was viewed as a logical means of preparing students for future employment.

One school board member felt that the awarding of two American Farmer degrees in his district's FFA chapter indicated a quality program. This board member indicated he would put forth

an exceptional amount of effort to retain vocational agriculture in his school, and said he felt vocational agriculture was one of the four most valuable courses students in his community could take.

Community support for the agriculture program was expressed through parental involvement in FFA activities and comments from community members when students won contests. In one school, agriculture programs were described as important to moderately important. School officials indicated that an exceptional amount of effort would be put forth to retain vocational agriculture in the curriculum.

Administrators expressed support by providing adequate budgets and supporting teachers' ideas and efforts. As one school official said, "Agriculture and home economics are old programs that we intend to retain."

Desired improvements included updating present equipment, including computer application and hydraulics in the agriculture curriculum, and expanding agriculture-related industry programs in the face of declining production agriculture opportunities.

Summary

Vocational agriculture was offered in each of the joint agreement schools. An advanced welding course taught at North Clay was offered on a shared basis. Flora was the primary district to share in the advanced welding course. Some adult agriculture courses were being taught at Flora but not as part of the joint agreement.

The vocational agriculture program at North Clay had two teachers serving 236 students, Flora had one teacher serving 197 students, North Wayne had one teacher serving 91 students, West Richland had one teacher serving 91 students, and Clay City had one teacher serving 83 students. Courses were either year or semester-long.

The facilities in North Clay were relatively new and spacious. The other schools tended to have older facilities. Programs were generally well-equipped.

Teachers served as department heads and so ordered supplies and kept records.

Teachers' experience ranged from 1 to 18 years. Schools with one teacher spent $15,500 to $25,000 for vocational agriculture; the two-teacher program cost $42,300. Students tended to be from farm families and 10 to 40 percent were expected to be in farming one year after high school. From 15 to 70 percent of the students were reported to seek full-time employment one year after high school. Most teachers felt their students represented a cross section of the student body.

Community and administrative support for vocational agriculture was strong.

Chapter VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The essential features of the decentralized secondary noncenter are: No formal governance structure, administrative staff, or teaching staff distinct from those of the participating school districts; no fiscal agent apart from school districts; teaching materials, equipment, and space that is owned by a single school district and rented by the other participating schools or in some cases, jointly purchased; and multiple facilities located in two or more communities, the feature that differentiates the decentralized from the centralized noncenter pattern. The Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement had all of these features.

Data relevant to each of the case study questions identified in Chapter I are presented here.

1. What are the essential features of the decentralized noncenter?

   a. Governance
      - No formal governing board
      - No overall superintendent; each superintendent supervises the portion of the agreement provided by his or her school
      - Superintendents, principals, and school vocational director(s) set policy
      - No formal executive board
      - No overall vocational director
      - No designated chair, director, or initiator
      - Superintendents, principals, and school vocational directors perform functions of an executive board and some functions of a governing board; each official makes recommendations to his or her own school board regarding joint agreement matters
      - Joint agreement provides specific legal structure; joint powers law provides general legal structure; joint agreement document approved annually by each participating school district board
   b. Funding and Budgets
      - State aids received by each district offering a shared program
      - Participating districts assess each other for program costs
      - School district budgets are fiscal repositories and school districts are fiscal agents for shared courses
      - Relatively low start up costs required
   c. Staff
      - All staff employed by school district
      - Shared courses administered by school district principals, superintendents and (if the school district has one) the vocational director.
      - Participating school district teachers staff shared courses
      - Increased use of some existing staff
   d. Services
      - Programs are provided by individual school districts to students in member districts
      - Each district is allocated a number of "slots" in each shared program; slots can be traded among the schools
   e. Facilities
      - Instructional facilities provided by each school district offering a shared course
      - Existing space rather than added space most likely to be used for classrooms, laboratories, offices
      - Adaptation of existing facilities minimal; some equipment may be added to accommodate added students
      - No added space for administration or support staff
      - Facilities used for shared programs likely to be more fully used

2. How does the decentralized noncenter work?

   a. Financing, Costs, and Cost Distribution
      - Teaching staff salaries and facilities costs prorated and distributed to school districts in proportion to the time students are in class and the enrollment from each district.

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- Costs per school district depend on number of students enrolled and individual program costs
- Administrative and support staff services contributed by school districts
- Per pupil cost based on instructional space, equipment, materials, and staff expenses, and transportation expenses

b. Scheduling
- Both full-year and semester courses offered
- Yearly schedules not synchronized
- School day lengths may vary.

c. Transportation
- Students are transported between schools
- 15 to 30 minutes required per round trip

d. Students
- Grade levels of students allowed to enroll in joint agreement courses determined by each school district's policy
- Students screened by home school

3. How does the decentralized noncenter fit with the characteristics of its setting?

a. School District Characteristics
- Participating district enrollments are small and vary within a limited range (from 1500 to 540 in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement)

b. Geographic Characteristics
- Area served by the joint agreement between 500 and 1,000 square miles (843 square miles in case studied)
- Pupil density is relatively sparse (ranged from 2.80 to 8.87 students per square mile in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement)
- Distance between participating communities differ; the distance between some being more than twice the distance between others (distances in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement ranged from 5-30 miles)

c. Social Characteristics
- Sufficient local industry to provide occupationally relevant experiences for students and occupational expertise input into program
- Communities and school districts have compatible orientations, philosophies, and value systems (in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement priority on and orientation toward vocational subjects was reflected in school curricula and leader philosophies)

4. What consequences does the decentralized noncenter have for educational quality and access?

a. Quality
- Strengths
  1. Staff specialization likely
  2. Teacher and program continuity possible
  3. Advisory committees connected with joint agreement courses and other vocational courses provide opportunity for school-community interaction
  4. Joint agreement subject to state regulations which ensures a degree of quality
  5. Vocational student organizations are part of vocational program curricula
- Weaknesses
  1. Shared administrative functions make lines of responsibility unclear, especially in initiating communication, planning, and evaluation
  2. Faculty associated with one school only; limited opportunity for direct exposure to other participating districts and communities
  3. Facilities may receive little updating or adaptation

b. Access
- Strengths
  1. Shared courses increase the number of programs available to students if they do not duplicate existing curricula and if existing programs are not dropped
  2. Access to programs is distributed similarly among member districts (e.g., in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement, all but one participating district had high access to one shared program and more limited access to four other programs)
  3. Unique resources and strengths are shared among school districts
  4. A school district can expand curriculum without bearing the entire cost and in areas where there are not enough students to justify a program in a single school

- Weaknesses
  1. Student travel is required
  2. Students may have to forgo participating in a desired course or activity in their own school to allow for transportation for shared courses
  3. May be insufficient slots in shared courses for student demand
  4. Students may tend to enroll in "what's at home" rather than travel

5. How might the decentralized noncenter be modified?

   a. Administrative leadership could be assigned to one administrator on a continuing basis or on a yearly or multi-year rotation system
   b. As few as two schools could participate
   c. In situations where districts do not have unique, sharable existing programs, a new program not justifiable for one school only could be implemented by each district and shared with the other districts (but at greater cost than sharing an already existing program)
   d. Shared courses could vary from year to year if schools have a sufficient number of unique courses
   e. Videotapes or other means of remote educational delivery could be used on some days to reduce the number of days students must travel

Conclusions

The decentralized noncenter differs from a center organizational structure in that its governance, management, financial, and instructional functions are based in and provided by participating school districts rather than a separate structure. These characteristics make the noncenter relatively easy and inexpensive to form and to dissolve. They also make it difficult for any one person to be in charge, which may lead to no one taking the initiative in planning and evaluation. Power and control remain in the hands of the school districts.

Because individual districts direct, control, and carry out the financial functions, each receives the state aid for the shared course(s) it offers. Rather than pooling financial resources, school districts exchange funds by paying each other for services. Costs to school districts are relatively low since existing buildings and administrators are used. Because each district arranges for its own administrative services, schools of widely different sizes can be accommodated in ways that are suitable to their unique circumstances. In addition, efficiencies of scale are gained since more students use existing space, equipment, and instructional staff. These efficiencies, together with the additional state aid for more students enrolled in a course, provide financial incentives. Additional incentives are present if the state reimbursement rate is higher (as it was in Illinois) for shared programs than for nonshared programs.

The individuality of school districts was especially apparent in data collection. There was no central repository of information on the joint agreement. Data from each district had to be pieced together to obtain a picture of the joint agreement as a whole. This resulted in gaps, discrepancies, and some possible inaccuracies.

The noncenter is a useful structure when participating schools have unique sharable programs. However, if a number of new programs were to be added, a center rather than a noncenter arrangement might be appropriate because of the additional facilities that would be required.

Four or five shared programs seem to be a reasonable number to appreciably expand curricula and to serve varied student interests. The number of programs shared in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement bore a direct relationship to the number of participating schools. The number of eligible students could also influence the number of shared programs since this is the total pool of students that will be distributed among the shared courses and other available courses in each school district.

Since programs were already established, facility quality was probably not as constrained as it would have been if a new program were developed to fit existing facilities. However, there could be a strain on the number of equipment stations available. Adding a new section to accommodate additional students would likely resolve the problem; otherwise, additional equipment stations might be needed.

The practice of charging rent for instructional space following a usage cost distribution method compensated school districts for the added wear and tear from enrolling additional students. The cost of administration balanced out since this service was provided by each district.

Scheduling was cited as a minor problem in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement case. In any cooperative arrangement each district has more flexibility when schedules are not synchronized. The trade-off between conforming to a synchronized schedule and dealing with the day-to-day problems when schedules are not synchronized may be viewed differently by different school districts. Districts in the case study were able to maintain flexibility by scheduling classes the first two hours in the day, thereby leaving the remainder of the day free from further scheduling complications. Both year- and semester-long classes were offered in the joint agreement arrangement studied. In order for students to be able to take one shared semester course, their own district must offer semester courses in which they can enroll during the remaining semester.

Distance between communities is a factor in the feasibility of a decentralized noncenter arrangement. In the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement, transportation of students was not a problem for the schools located in close proximity. However, those on the outer fringes were 30 miles apart and tended not to exchange students.

Two characteristics of the students enrolled probably contributed to the success of the joint agreement. First, the careful screening of students likely made them more welcome at other schools. Second, because the courses were advanced, they were likely to attract students with serious interest in the area of study.

Overall enrollments at four of the schools were similar, but Flora was considerably larger. This suggests that Flora might have been able to offer several unique courses to the other schools, making the noncenter centralized instead of decentralized. However, the fact that several schools offered shared courses may have contributed to the enthusiasm with which they participated. West Richland, which did not offer a program, had the lowest participation rate. However, it was also the most distant and had entered the agreement later than the others.

The fact that several schools had unique sharable programs contributed to the suitability of the decentralized noncenter pattern in this setting. Strong school district commitment is important in the decentralized noncenter since all of the impetus and initiative must come from the school districts. The vocational orientation of the communities and school districts and the strong business and industry base, which provided money, materials, employment, and training opportunities, were additional supportive factors in the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement situation.

An advantage of the requirement that prerequisites be taken in the home schools was that students could participate in vocational student organizations there. By sharing established programs, program continuity and development of a program's reputation among students were possible.

On the negative side, participating districts had little control over quality, improvement, or continuation of shared programs. School district officials had few opportunities to meet together to discuss the future of the joint agreement, so their approach to managing the operation was more maintenance-level than developmental. Teachers had no formal communication with other school districts and communities and so may have lacked insight into the needs and characteristics of students from the other communities.

The goal of the Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement was to expand the availability of existing programs. In this case, quality was probably ensured because only programs desired by other schools were chosen. However, if a new facility is really needed, this approach may simply expand availability of a mediocre program. Thus, this arrangement is likely to work best in a situation where high-quality sharable programs are available.

The Clay-Wayne County Joint Agreement did expand access of students to previously unavailable vocational curricula at a far lower cost than that for adding the same number of programs to each district.

Travel limited educational access since students had to use the third hour to return to their home school. However, because shared courses were held first thing in the day, students didn't have to miss class to travel to the course. The disadvantage of this schedule was that students who could not get to school to leave on an early bus were eliminated from the shared courses. The travel requirement also made students hesitant to enroll in shared courses alone, possibly eliminating those who didn't have a friend with similar interests.

There was no evidence that schools discouraged students from enrolling in joint agreement courses because of the added cost. However, this could be a factor in some situations when a usage rate cost distribution formula is used.

In summary, the decentralized noncenter has many advantages for school districts, primarily the expansion of educational opportunity for students at reasonable cost and the opportunity to gain efficiencies in the operation of vocational programs. The most significant problems are the lack of clarity in leadership functions and the need for student travel. Two practices that facilitated the arrangement were the scheduling of shared courses the first two hours in the day and the careful screening of students. The arrangement is likely to work best where distances between communities are relatively short and schools have high-quality programs not offered by other districts.

Recommendations

The decentralized noncenter concept should be explored further. Its low cost and district-based control make it likely to appeal to rural school districts. The biggest risk is that there is little control over program quality by participating school districts. This risk could be reduced considerably if state reimbursement for cooperation is contingent upon meeting a set level of program quality.

Ways to reduce the problem of ambiguous leadership responsibilities (e.g., assigning leadership to one of the school administrators on a continuing or rotating basis) should be sought. However, the close involvement and shared responsibility of school officials from all schools is a subtle strength of this model, and care should be taken that assigning a single leader does not reduce the involvement or responsibility of the other school administrators. Rather, the leader should be responsible for planning and development initiatives.

This model should be tried with varying numbers of schools. It may work well for two schools that could each offer a unique set of vocational programs.

The noncenter and center models should be systematically compared with respect to initiation of new programs. Knowledge about when it makes sense for a school district to initiate a new program with the intention of sharing it with other districts would be helpful to school districts and could provide states with a basis for developing incentives for such practices.

Varying shared courses from year to year should be investigated. Rotation of offerings in several small schools could provide students with an array of vocational curricula. The advantages of curricular breadth should be weighed against the cost of unused space and equipment during the year a program is not offered. Other variations of course rotation should be developed and tested. For example, it might be feasible to offer a course for students from certain schools one year and for students from other schools the next year.

Arrangements in which students travel only two or three days a week also should be explored. On nontravel days students might receive instruction in their own school via videotapes or telecommunications. This approach would necessitate some duplicate facilities and might raise costs if facility expenses surpassed travel savings. In a setting like the Clay-Wayne Joint Agreement, where prerequisite courses are taken in the home school, equipment may already be available at no added cost.

Finally, the practice of scheduling shared courses at the beginning or end of the day should be considered seriously by schools contemplating sharing curricula. This schedule provides scheduling flexibility for most of the day, reduces schedule conflicts for students by using before- and after-school time for travel, and requires that students miss only one period in their home school for travel. However, the flexibility and time advantages must be weighed against the possibility that students who cannot provide their own transportation to school or home may be eliminated from participating or the school district may have to provide an early or late bus. Some coordination with sports buses might be possible.

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4. Illinois Population Projections, Revised 1970-2025. State of Illinois Bureau of the Budget, 1981.

5. Peterson, R., Thomas, R., Haugen, J., and Rabideau, R. Approaches and Patterns for Delivering Agriculture and Home Economics Programs: A Conceptual Model Based on a Review of Related Literature. Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 545-1981. St. Paul: University of Minnesota, 1981.

6. U.S. Census and Illinois Population Projections, 1970, Revised. State of Illinois Bureau of the Budget, 1981.

7. U.S. Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics, 1980, Part 15, Illinois, 1983.

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9. U.S. Census, Summary of Economic Characteristics, 1980.

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APPENDIX A

Continuing Joint Agreement

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL JOINT AGREEMENT

ARTICLE I - General

Section 1. The name of this agreement shall be CLAY-WAYNE COUNTY AGREEMENT.

Section 2. Purpose of this continuing vocational-technical education agreement is to provide students training and experiences in vocational skills not available in home schools.

Section 3. Membership in this agreement is:

North Clay Community Unit #25
North Wayne Community Unit #200
Flora Community Unit #35
Clay City Community Unit #10
West Richland Comm. Dist #20

ARTICLE II - Organization and Operation

Section 1. Administrative district shall be those districts operating programs shared under this agreement. (See Article III, Section 2, of this agreement)

Section 2. The functions of the administrative district shall be to provide facilities, equipment, materials, instructors and supervision in the vocational area(s) specified for that particular administrative district.

Section 3. The administrative-supervisory structure shall be for each program operating under the joint agreement that of the "home" or providing district of that program.

Section 4. Duties of administrative-supervisory personnel shall be those which are regularly prescribed for such school personnel of the "home" or providing district.

Section 5. Administrative advisory committee shall be established represented by each participating school.

a. Each participating district shall appoint two members to the administrative advisory committee. One should be an administrator of the district and one should be a member of the vocational instructional staff.

b. The function of the committee is to coordinate the mechanics of the agreement; to articulate all matters pertaining to the operation of the program shared under this agreement; and to recommend changes in the Vocational Joint Agreement.

ARTICLE III - Program

Section 1. All physical facilities and arrangements shall be provided by the administrative district as called for under Article II, Section 2.

Section 2. Types of programs and/or services to be provided under this Joint Agreement are:

a. Health Occupations:

Orientation to Health Occupations - Flora High School

Health Career Skills - Flora High School

Cooperative-On-The-Job Training - Flora High School

b. Building Trades I - Flora High School

c. Building Trades II - Flora High School

d. Auto Mechanics - Cisne High School

e. Advanced Welding - North Clay Community High School

f. Cooperative Career Education - Flora High School

g. Automotive Services - Cisne High School

h. Graphic Arts I - Clay City High School

i. Graphic Arts II - Clay City High School

Section 3. Employment, supervision and evaluation of the teaching staff for any class operated under this joint agreement shall be the responsibility of the administrative district of the class.

Section 4. The Administrative Advisory Committee and the administrative district(s) shall work with and through local vocational advisory committee as well as community and state agencies in the furtherance and betterment of the programs operated under the joint agreement.

Section 5. Financial:

a. Administrative costs shall be assumed by the administrative district as part of the normal operational cost of the school.

b. Schools with students enrolled in a class shall pay tuition of such students to the school attended; such tuition shall be based upon per capita cost of the specific program less state and federal reimbursement computed in the following manner:

1. Instructional personnel cost shall be that portion of the cost expended for a specific program.

2. Cost of items purchased as equipment or capital outlay necessary for the operation of the class shall be depreciated over a period of five years less any direct reimbursement.

3. Any instructional supplies (excluding building materials and lot used in building trades classes) or general classroom supplies used in a class shall be included in the operational cost.

4. The net cost of the class shall be divided by the average monthly enrollment to arrive at the per capita tuition cost.

c. Reimbursement will be made by each administrative district after all federal and state funds have been received.

d. Each administrative district will annually prepare and receive local school board approval for a financial budget on their respective vocational joint agreement programs.

ARTICLE IV - Transportation

Section 1. It shall be the responsibility of the participating district to make provisions for transportation of students to and from the attendance center.

Section 2. Each participating district shall claim its own transportation reimbursement.

ARTICLE V - Participation and Withdrawal

Section 1. A school district identified in Article I, Section 3, becomes eligible for participation upon approval of agreement by its board of education and the adoption of the Continuing Joint Agreement Resolution (attached) prescribed by the Division of Vocational and Technical Education, State of Illinois.

Section 2. Each district may elect not to participate in any classes or programs offered under this agreement.

Section 3. Each district may enroll students in any program offered under this agreement provided:

a. An invitation to participate is extended to member schools by administrative school.

b. Enrollment space is available in program offered.

c. Intent and number to be enrolled are supplied to the administrative district within a reasonable time for planning (preferably in the spring).

d. Agrees to pay the pro-rata cost for semester enrolled if student withdraws after the mid-term of that semester.

Section 4. A member school may withdraw its membership no later than March 15th by informing all other member schools in writing that it no longer will be party to the joint agreement.

ARTICLE VI- Provisions for Amendment

Once approved and executed by boards of education of parties involved, amendments proposed by the Administrative Advisory Council of this Continuing Vocational-Technical Education Joint Agreement must be approved by boards of education of all member schools to be binding.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
ILLINOIS OFFICE OF EDUCATION
JOSEPH M. CRONIN, SUPERINTENDENT

Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777

JOINT AGREEMENT RESOLUTION

Whereas, present statutes allow school districts to jointly offer programs for better educational advantages, and

Whereas, an efficient and proper program may not feasibly be conducted by one district alone, and

Whereas, Section 10-22.31a of The School Code of Illinois authorizes joint agreements between several school districts, through their school boards, to establish such programs:

Now, therefore, let it be resolved that _____, No. _____

_____, County of _____, Illinois, be authorized to enter into a joint agreement with the following district and/or districts_____
_____
_____ and be bound thereby, and

Be it further resolved that the President and Secretary of this Board are hereby authorized to direct and execute said joint agreement, copy of which is attached hereto, and

Be it further resolved that this Board of Education hereby approved of the Program for _____ as presented, copy of
(Name of Joint Agreement or Area Vocational Ctr.)
programs is attached hereto.

CERTIFICATION

I,_____, Secretary of the Board of Education of _____,
Name of District

_____, _____ County, Illinois do hereby certify that
District Number
the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a certain resolution which was duly passed by said Board at its regular meeting held on the _____ day of _____A.D., 19____.

This joint agreement shall be considered a continuing agreement dissolved via Section 10-22.31a of The School Code of Illinois or until amended by other means.

ATTEST:

_____ _____
President of Board Secretary of Board

_____ _____
District Number County District Number County

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APPENDIX B

Cost Calculation and Billing Forms

VOCATIONAL JOINT AGREEMENT
Billing Work Sheet
for
Clay City C.U. # 10
Flora C.U. # 35
North Clay C.U. # 25
North Wayne C.U. #200

School Year _____ Class Offering _____

Administrative Center _____ Unit _____ Billing Date _____

Report made by _____ Title _____

TOTAL COST PER CLASS COST PER STUDENT

Teacher Salary _____+_____=$_____+_____= $_____

Teacher Expenses _____+_____=$_____+_____= $_____

Equipment $_____+_____=$_____+_____= $_____

(New equipment is to be calculated on a 5-year depreciation basis)

Supplies $_____+_____=$_____+_____= $_____

Room Rental $800 (+/x)_____=$_____+_____= $_____

Total $_____

Individual District Totals: Total

Clay City C.U. #10 $_____x_____ students = $_____

Flora C.U. #35 $_____x_____ students = $_____

North Clay C.U. #25 $_____x_____ students = $_____

North Wayne C.U.#200 $_____x_____ students = $_____

Totals $_____x_____ students = $_____

D.V.T.E. reimbursement will be made by the administrative district when received on a per student/per school basis

COMMENTS/EXPLANATION:

COURSE NAME_____

COST OF PROGRAM

Total Cost_____
Number of Students_____
Cost per Student (Yr.)_____
Cost per Student (Sem.)_____

Reimbursement

Total Reimbursement_____
Number of Students_____
Reimbursement per Student_____
Reimburse. per student (Sem.)___

****

	1st Semester		2nd Semester	
Cost per student	_____		_____	
Reimb. per student	_____		_____	
Net cost per student	_____		_____	
No. of students	_____		_____	
Total Cost	_____	plus	_____	Yearly Cost _____

Cost per student	_____		_____	
Reimb. per student	_____		_____	
Net cost per student	_____		_____	
No. of students	_____		_____	
Total Cost	_____	plus	_____	Yearly Cost _____

Cost per student	_____		_____	
Reimb. per student	_____		_____	
Net cost per student	_____		_____	
No. of students	_____		_____	
Total Cost	_____	plus	_____	Yearly Cost _____

Cost per student	_____		_____	
Reimb. per student	_____		_____	
Net cost per student	_____		_____	
No. of students	_____		_____	
Total Cost	_____	plus	_____	Yearly Cost _____

May, 1986

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